



Gateway

23 April 2021

German Penfriend - Alumna of The Week - Rider of the Week

Music Success



Emma

Isabella in Upper Prep recently won second place in the 9 years and under Strings Solo Group of the Woodley Festival.

Although it was held online this year, she worked hard to record the piece and made it an enjoyable experience. Isabella loves playing cello and often expresses that it makes her peaceful in mind. Well done.

Emma in Lower I played in the semi final of the Berkshire Young Musician Competition (Strings) 2021 in March - she had entered earlier in the year via video and had progressed to the closing stages. She has been chosen as one of three finalists for the 9 years and under section which is a fantastic achievement. Emma will take part in the final in May.

She also took part in Woodley Festival recently and was placed 3rd in the 9 years and under string solo.



Isabella

Blue Peter Badges

Lottie, Upper II has earned herself quite an array of Blue Peter badges through great endeavour. She has written a summary below of what they are for:

I earned my sport 2020 badge by doing gymnastics and sending in some photos of me on the bars. For my Music badge 2020, my mum taught me how to play the piano so I sent Blue Peter what song I had learned.

To get my purple (Fan Club) badge I had to fill out a form telling them what I like and don't like about Blue Peter, and if I



could control Blue Peter for a day what would I make them do.

Finally I earned my green (Environmental) badge by sending Blue Peter what I did with my website, and also litter picking.

Lottie - Upper II

Heads: Connected

Cultural repair

When is injustice individual, and when is it systemic? In the areas of both race and gender this debate has remained vividly alive over recent weeks. In the UK the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities released a report querying the existence of institutional racism that drew widespread protest

[Read more](#)

For weekly events and reminders, please go to your [My School Portal account](#)

This week's Heads Connected: [Cultural repair](#) by Will le Fleming



Indian Carnatic Music

Over the Easter holidays, Nainika and Threna kept busy by learning Indian Carnatic music and Bhajans.

On Wednesday of this week was the Indian festival called Srirama Navami, and both girls performed some bhajans (a devotional song) at home.

They were both so proud and excited to show their performance to the whole class and their teachers. However, for anyone wishing to see their performance, please click on the link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dZoGrFiZLs>

Nainika and Threna



German Penfriend

There really is no substitute for trying out your school German to order a meal or shop in a local food market and, when Covid-19 forced us to cancel the Lower V trip to Vienna last July, it was a tremendous disappointment to students and staff alike. To replicate something of the excitement of speaking German with a native speaker, the German Department offered to set up penfriend links for students in Lower V and interested students were paired with partners roughly their age at schools in Vienna and Stuttgart. Here is a flavour of the exciting new friendships with Abbey students have made.

'It's been really interesting to find out what's going on in Germany in 2020/21 especially with Covid.'

We've talked about everything from hobbies, to school, to Covid, even the weather - (they have a lot of snow where Lorena lives) and of course food.

I've really loved talking to Lorena because it feels amazing to think she is so far away, but still having similar experiences to me, and is a great friend even though we have never met. It's also really helped me learn German, and I think not only my vocabulary, but also my spelling has really improved.'

Nancy, LV



Lorena, Nancy's German Penfriend

'It's really interesting talking to Anja about her hobbies, holidays and schooling - we both find online school annoying. Talking to her is definitely improving my German and also helping me to learn a bit about Austria, which I find really interesting.'

It did surprise me a bit how easy it's been to talk to her, I wasn't sure how much we would have in common especially given she lives in another country but we do which is really nice. Talking to Anja is fun and I'm really glad I have her as a penpal.'

Amelia, LV

Elevate Webinars

Here are the details of Elevate Education's Parent Webinar Series for this term.

Elevate works with our students, delivering high impact workshops on study skills, motivation, wellbeing, and exam preparation. These webinars are suitable for parents of students in Year 7-13.

27 April - Exam Preparation and Skills
Optimising the final weeks before exams and maximising exam-room performance.

11 May - Memory Skills
More effective memorisation techniques that will save time and you won't forget

25 May - Time Management
Aligning family expectations on homework while maintaining a school-life balance.

15 June - Motivation
How to create and sustain motivation across the year.

6 July - Technology
How to self-regulate technology usage and use technology to enhance learning.

Registration is essential and is free for you as a parent of the School. You can register for free at:

<https://get.elevatecoaching.info/uk/register>

The webinars are live from 6pm – 7pm where the presenter will share Elevate's key research and skills, and will conduct a live Q&A.

Junior Chess

Berkshire Girls under 11 Chess team finished in bronze position in the National finals at the weekend.

Five players from Abbey Juniors were in the team - almost half of the team and more than any other school in the county.

A special mention to Anaya who won four of her five games, along with Eshita and Saachi who each won three from five.

Alumna of the Week: Charlotte Dale (2015)

Charlotte Dale (2015) left The Abbey to study Classics at UCL. Charlotte now works for the Civil Service Fast Stream (an accelerated leadership programme) within Human Resources.

1. When did you leave The Abbey and what are you doing now?

I left The Abbey in 2015 and went on to study Classics at UCL. During the summer holidays, I interned at a range of Public Relations (PR) and Communications firms and after applying for what seemed like an infinite amount of jobs, I joined a consumer PR firm in Southwark a few weeks after graduating.

I decided this wasn't for me so I applied again to the Civil Service Fast Stream (an accelerated leadership programme) and moved to a financial PR firm in the City while I waited to hear if I was successful in gaining a place on the Fast Stream.

The Civil Service supports the government of the day in delivering public services as well as helping it to develop and implement its policies. I was lucky to join the Civil Service on their Fast Stream in September 2019 on their Human Resources (HR) scheme. Since joining, I have worked in the Ministry of Justice, the Joint Biosecurity Centre and Test and Trace.

I now work in the Home Office. My current role is a HR Business Partner to a project delivery function in Border Force which looks after the front-line technical services which keep the country safe; from terrorist and nuclear threats at one extreme to facilitating VIP passenger arrivals at the other.

It involves helping Senior Civil Servants with all their People issues – from recruitment and wellbeing through to organisation design and learning and development.

This is my last placement before completing the Fast Stream where I hope to go on to secure a permanent role in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at a government department.

2. What do you miss the most about The Abbey?

I miss the people the most! I miss being able to see my friends everyday and I

think it's something you can easily take for granted when it's what you're used to.

My friends from The Abbey are truly friends for life and I am so grateful that I was able to find such supportive, fun and caring friends who have continued to play a huge role in my life even after school.

Additionally, I miss the incredible support you receive from the teachers who are always happy to help, even when you've left The Abbey as a pupil. Their genuine care for you, both academically and personally, is something I will never forget!

I also miss the support staff who ensure The Abbey is able to run as smoothly as it does. They were always so friendly and make The Abbey such a great place to be.

Finally, I miss having lunch on a Friday in the Sixth Form centre – the chicken wraps and pizza were the best!

3. What would you say is your biggest achievement?

Volunteering is something I've been interested in since completing the CAS element of the IB. As well as being involved in various outreach projects at work, I volunteer with a range of charities, such as the Social Mobility Foundation, which seeks to equal the playing field when it comes to social mobility in the UK and involves mentoring a Sixth Form student from a lower socioeconomic background.

I also volunteer for South London Cares, a charity which aims to tackle loneliness among the elderly. I am involved in their Love Your Neighbour scheme which matches a younger person and an older person together from the same area to meet regularly and aims to bridge the generation gap, fight loneliness and ultimately create new friendships.

Whether it's seeing your mentee secure their dream job or getting a text from your new friend to say how much they appreciate your company, it feels great to know you're helping others.

4. What advice would you give to current students?

Don't be afraid to be confident or take a risk. I was set on studying A Levels in Sixth



Form but after a chat with Mr Fanning on GCSE results day, he persuaded me that the IB was the right choice for me.

Completing the IB was one of the best things I've done (even if it involved some friendly rivalry with the A Level girls) and I truly believe it's shaped who I am today.

The experience taught me to not shut off other opportunities just because you think you won't be able to do them – you have such a great support network around you who will help you be the best you can be!

Rider of the Week

Myrah in Lower I has been riding at Wellington Riding School (WRS) for over a year - starting as a hobby due to her love of animals and gradually it grew into something that she truly enjoys.

She loves to see how different ponies/horses have different personalities, and how she too has to change her outlook towards each of them in order to be able to get them to listen to her and follow her instructions.

Myrah was at the Holiday Riding Club at WRS during the Easter Break, and was awarded the 'Rider of the Week'.

It is a five day non-residential programme where the children learn all about caring and grooming their horses as well as different horse riding disciplines.



The Big Ask Survey

The new Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, has this week launched The Big Ask – the largest ever consultation with children aged 4 to 17 in England.

It aims to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future, so that we can put children at the heart of our country's recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The results from this survey will help the Children's Commissioner identify the barriers preventing children from reaching their potential, put forward solutions and set ambitious goals for the country to achieve.

Parents, care leavers and those working with children are also invited to complete the adult survey to share their views about the future for children and young people today, and what they think is holding young people back.

[Student survey](#)

[Parent survey](#)

Lockdown - What I have learned from it

Lockdown was the best teacher
It taught me to make the most of the worst
In this unique time, I learnt so much
Too much to even fit in this verse.

Before, I gave up when I couldn't do things
And didn't try again for days
But now I have learnt to be more resilient
In the future, this will help me in so many ways.

I have learnt how important friends are
And from now, I'll be grateful to have them.
Knowing how important friends are, I'll be a friend to more people
I know friendship is worth more than a gem.

When this unique time has finally gone
I will remember these important lessons forever
Before, I was a very different person
But the person I am now is much better.

Anoushka, UIII

National Cross Country Success

After our successes at the Berkshire Schools Virtual Cross Country Championships, a number of students in Lower IV and Upper IV entered the English Schools National Virtual Cross Country Championships in March.

They had to run 2km and once verified were placed nationally against all other entries from England. The students did extremely well and particular mention to Lily and Ruby who helped the Berkshire Junior girls team to 7th place in the country. Out of 553 runners in the Junior Girls category the girls placed as follows:
Lily 95th, Ruby 102nd, Kate 124th, Maya 152nd, Holly 184th, Amelia 206th, Sophie 216th and Cara 279th.

Congratulations to all students on their success in this national competition and let's hope that we can run some actual cross countries next season.

Be Inspired by Michelle Obama

Be inspired!

Michelle Obama, 1964-present. American attorney and author who was the first lady of the United States from 2009 to 2017. She is married to the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama, and was the first African-American first lady. After her husband's presidency, her influence remained high; in 2020, Obama topped Gallup's poll of the most admired woman in America for the third year running.