


# EDGE

Edgbaston High School Magazine

Summer Term 2020



**Miss Saigon: Students dazzle in  
stunning production of the  
classic musical**

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**EHS Ethics Forum: A-level  
students chair debate with  
leading figures in politics, religion  
and the media**

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**STEAM Day: Workshops and  
talks serve up pupil inspiration**

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# WELCOME

It has, without a doubt, been a year of firsts for both me and the school. Below, Anya has beautifully articulated, as ever, what the pupils have achieved and the many ways they have showcased their numerous skills and talents. I have come to realise that there is very little I can normally add to what Anya and the wider leadership team express about EHS and why it is, and remains, the school of their choice. They have, on every occasion, encapsulated what is so special about our school. The magazine gives a flavour of how much the pupils want to be involved and the opportunities that they take and create for themselves. Their enthusiasm, tenacity and desire to get the most out of their educational experience was one of the first things that I remarked upon when I arrived at the school. EHS is a place where the individual is encouraged to explore their interests, develop their skills, be open to new ideas, be present in everything they do and to become aware of the footprint that we all leave in the communities we live and work in. This magazine serves to highlight this, and it has been a joy to revisit some of the events and activities that have happened. The happiness that the girls have to be in the school and their enjoyment of learning is easy to see when you walk around EHS. It is this community spirit and their learning together that the girls immediately missed when we had to temporarily close our doors. However, it did not take long for the pupils to find alternative ways to connect with each other and the initiatives that they implemented as well as the ones that the teachers developed soon helped us feel that we were together again, albeit in a rather different way. We will be showcasing what the pupils have achieved during Lockdown later in the year. For now, please take a moment to enjoy the articles in this magazine and celebrate with me the achievements of the school and the students of Edgbaston High School.

*Clare Macro, Headteacher*

## ANYA, HEAD GIRL'S MESSAGE

This year's Autumn and Spring Term, as usual, have been completely filled with exciting events here at EHS. We welcomed our new Headmistress, Mrs Macro, at the beginning of the academic year after having said a fond farewell to Dr Weeks; I think everyone would agree that she is the perfect fit for our school.

In October we enjoyed an Ethics Forum, which consisted of a 'Question Time' style debate with a varied and interesting panel. From Conservative to Labour politicians, there were certainly some contrasting viewpoints! It all made for a very fascinating and heated debate, and something that I am sure would be welcomed again in the upcoming years.

Following the political theme, a week before the general election was set to take place, we held our very own Flash Election in the octagon. It was amazing to see the partnership between girls from Year 10 and Year 11 as they stood in pairs, representing the main political parties. It was certainly an effective way of engaging the entire Senior School in very current events.

We have also supported various charities throughout the term, holding our annual Pink Day for Breast Cancer Awareness, as well as staging the EHS Talent Show for Children in Need.

A highlight of the Autumn Term, however, was watching our own production of Miss Saigon, and after months of hard work from all the girls involved, I think it is fair to say that it is one of the most impressive I have seen from my time at school.

The Spring Term has been just as eventful, despite being cut slightly short. We enjoyed an incredible talk from our guest speaker, Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon, co-founder of the organisation Stemettes. She discussed the importance of more females joining the STEAM industries



and showed us many examples of recent technological advances. We were all utterly inspired by her performance and left in awe at the confidence and determination with which she presented herself.

The Spring Term ended with a somewhat unconventional house quiz, however memorable nonetheless. We participated in this event through an online questionnaire and although we missed the bustling, excited atmosphere of the Octagon, as with any house

event, there was still the same sense of anxious anticipation as we waited for the results.

Overall the past term has been unlike any other, starting off as normal but ending with home-schooled education. I really feel, however, that this has highlighted the strength of our EHS community. Though we are keeping our appropriate distances, we have utilised our technology programmes to the fullest and have mastered continuous contact with our teachers and classmates. As a result, this difficult time has been aided by communication, making isolation less isolating.



## YEAR 13 STUDENT WINS PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP



**W**e were delighted to receive the news that Year 13 student Mandeep has won a full army officer scholarship to the prestigious Sandhurst Academy.

Here, Mandeep shares her experience with us:

"In February, I applied for an army officer scholarship after hearing about it at the EHS Careers Fair, although it was very different to anything I had done before. My application went through an extensive screening process over several months which involved lots of paperwork, interviews, testing and even a thorough army medical check in one of their barracks. I also had to start preparing for assessment tasks - which would involve both physical and written tests - which I would have to complete if I got through to the Army Officer Selection Board. The PE department were all very supportive throughout the process and helped me with my training.

"In April, I received the news that I would go through to the final stage of the application. This involved staying at Westbury for three days where I was put into a team, and completed a variety of different tests. The tests included essays, writing and discussing a planning exercise, command tasks (where I had to plan a route and lead my team across in good time), obstacle courses, more interviews and a bleep test. At the end, although I came out battered and bruised, and had even broken my glasses, I was proud of having survived it all and enjoyed the experience.

"The competition was extremely tough as there were many bright candidates with military backgrounds and experience already, and they were mostly male. However, a week later I was informed of the results, and I was shocked to learn that I had managed to obtain the full army scholarship, meaning that I have a place at Sandhurst Academy where I will undergo officer training as an army scholar after I have completed my degree at university." Congratulations, Mandeep, we are very proud of you!

## EHS PUPILS PERFORM MAHLER 8 'SYMPHONY OF A THOUSAND'



**I**n January, girls from EHS joined five combined choirs of international reputation alongside the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and a glittering line up of celebrated international soloists to perform Mahler's gigantic Symphony No. 8 'Symphony of a Thousand'. "Try to imagine the whole universe beginning to ring and resound", said Mahler. The perfect description for this massive ninety-minute work.

The CBSO's charismatic young female conductor, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, has risen quickly to international fame and is leading the way for women in this very male-dominated area. She is already listed as one of the greatest conductors of all time and has many of classical music's greatest accolades to her name. In Mahler 8, seemingly, this great heavy weight of a symphony has met its match! Congratulations to all girls who took part. The rehearsal process and stamina required to perform this work was extreme but it is an experience that the girls will never forget!

## WHATEVER THE WEATHER

**T**he Prep School has been working with Birmingham University and is looking forward to studying weather data which will be readily available without even going out in the rain!

A Netatmo weather station has been successfully installed at the Pavilion, and anyone is able to access any Netatmo weather station around the world and is able to study timeline graphs and results of what the weather station in EHS has captured.

We have available the rain water, wind and temperature/air pressure modules and are looking forward to comparing our local conditions with those globally.



A woman in a red and orange patterned qipao stands on a stage, looking upwards. The background is dark with red lighting effects. The text 'SCHOOL PRODUCTION' is at the top left, and 'STUDENTS DAZZLE IN... MISS SAIGON' is in the center. A large text box on the right contains three paragraphs of text.

SCHOOL PRODUCTION

# STUDENTS DAZZLE IN... *MISS* SAIGON

**E**dgbaston High School's ambitious staging of Miss Saigon took place in November and has been a theatrical triumph. The cast and orchestra, numbering around one hundred people, dazzled sold out audiences with their polished and commanding performances, moving spectators to tears and leading to five consecutive standing ovations.


For the first time in a Senior School production, two students joined us from the Preparatory school (Jessie Xu and Zoe Shi) to play the part of Tam, the son of Kim and Chris. Kim and Chris, performed by Amara McCracken and Tommy Fauweather, took us on a breathtaking journey from delirious happiness to unbearable sorrow. The Engineer, played by Francesca Fernando, was witty and fresh and made light relief of some very moving scenes. Keerat Bharj, Fiona Mellor, Persia Shoja-Assadi and Isabella Birch gave impressive and moving performances of the characters Ellen and GiGi, while Jonathan Anderson and Tom Daniel made a huge impact in their respective roles as Jon and Thuy. The main characters were supported superbly by an excellent chorus and spectacular dance sequences which brought the full cast scenes to life.

Throughout the performances and during the rehearsal process all the performers relied on a massive team of students and staff back stage to help turn the exceptional singing and dancing into something that looked visually stunning. Many students assisted with stage management, ably directed by our Stage Manager, student Martha Howells. Other areas included props, makeup, hair, costumes, tech, publicity, photography, art and design, catering and front of house. Finally, students, staff, parents, volunteers and old girls joined professional musicians in the orchestra to provide the gargantuan instrumental accompaniment that underpins the drama on stage.

Throughout the planning and rehearsal process, a large staff team were instrumental in enabling the production to look and sound as good as can possibly be achieved. To this end I would like to thank Mr Skilbeck for coaching the singers, arranging additional



# SCHOOL PRODUCTION



music for the band including writing the bows for the show and for his excellent encouragement and support. Mrs Ehiogu once again amazed us with her inventive choreography and stage direction while Mr Southall and Mr Berman ensured that the singers could be seen and heard at all times. Mrs Lucas provided the makeup including lots of blood (!) and Mrs Harris and Mrs Coley ensured the students were dressed appropriately for the changes of scene in lovely costumes. The Art Department once again excelled and produced the most wonderful programmes, posters, decoration around school and props thanks to Mr Dukes and Miss Mullet. Mr Lane provided characterisation coaching which greatly helped the principal characters and Miss Lawrence was for ever on hand to assist Mrs Ehiogu with the dance numbers. Mrs Syer and her World Challenge girls created a Vietnamese feast for Saturday's final Gala Night and lots of money was raised for the World Challenge cause. The fantastic sets and lighting were created especially for the school by Mr Andrew Exeter. Mrs Batchelor ensured that guests were greeted every evening and assisted greatly with logistics such as risk assessments and fire safety. Many members of staff assisted with the orchestra and performing in the opening of Act 2, 'Bui Doi', including Mrs Jarvis (cello), Mrs Howell (piano), Dr Haining (flute), Miss Archer (flute), Jadie Carey (cello), Martha Anna Brookes (trombone), Phil Brookes (bassoon), Mr Berman (voice), Mr Stuart (voice) and Mr Passey (voice).

I am extremely grateful to all involved and continue to congratulate the students on pulling off the most stunning performance I have ever witnessed in a school. The level of ability was summed up perfectly at the Gala Performance by Guest of Honour and Star of 'Hamilton the Musical', Olivier Award Nominee Mr Cleve September - 'We have seen stars of the future on this stage tonight!'

Mr Robson

Director of Music





## ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

# ETHICS FORUM DRAWS EXPERTS FOR DEBATE



**I**n September, EHS played host to a panel-based discussion and debate session: the Ethics Forum. EHS pupils were joined by students from neighbouring schools for the much anticipated opportunity to ask pressing, even controversial, questions in a BBC Question Time style forum.

We were delighted to welcome a panel of well-known experts from a range of professional fields: Preet Gill MP, Councillor Alex Yip, (Conservative, Sutton Wylde Green), Councillor Nicky Brennan - (Lab, Sparkhill), Julie Brooks, Pharmaceuticals, Formulation and Drug Delivery at Birmingham University and the Rt Rev Simon Heathfield, Archdeacon of Aston.

This year's event was superbly chaired by Year 13 Scholars

Davina and Mandeep, who did an impressive job of steering the debate. The panel were questioned by the students about the pressing issues of the day, including the environment, medical ethics, the inflammatory rhetoric used in politics, and of course, Brexit.

It was a morning of impassioned and, at times, heated debate between the Labour and Conservative representatives. There were also some excellent contributions from students from our visiting schools, Handsworth Grammar and St Paul's School for Girls. This was a valuable experience for all involved; certainly the thought-provoking matters were the subject of debate that carried on amongst students long into lunch-time and beyond.

# ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

## Election Fever sweeps EHS



As General Election hysteria swept the country, EHS decided to hold various election events, including a whole school Flash Election in order to clarify the main parties' policies, and a Year 10 event which involved electing an MP to represent the constituency of Edgbaston High School.

Each form created a new political party, with new ideas, new policies and new manifestos. 10M created the Demos Party represented by Marie Eve. 10N called themselves Reform and their candidate was Alisha. 10R saw Zahraa share the views of the Mission Party and finally 10S presented Naba and the Endeavour Party.

Each party wrote independently their own manifestos under the guidance of a campaign team and then pitched their manifestos to Years 8 and 9 on Tuesday, ably assisted by the presenting team of Laiba, Nikita, Eshaal and Rhea. They canvassed for votes across the year group and opinion polls were very evenly split. Voting then took place in the Polling Station in the Ante-Hall on Thursday morning, under the strict guidance of the Polling Clerks Anissa, Eshaal, Marie Eve and Rhea. They were busy organising the voting electorate and managing the Polling Booths and Voting Boxes.

All of the girls involved put in a fantastic performance all week and showed their younger peers how important it is to exercise their right to vote. When the next General Election comes around... we now know who the Parties should be calling on to help run their campaigns...

**Have your say!**  
**EHS FLASH ELECTION**





## ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

# PASSION AND INSPIRATION AT EDGBASTON

As part of EHS STEAM Day, we were delighted to be joined by the inspirational Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE. Dr Imafidon is the CEO of STEMettes, an award-winning social enterprise working to inspire and support young women into STEM careers. In her talk she encouraged EHS girls to pursue careers in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) and explored the range of opportunities available to them.

Year 9 pupils then spent the rest of our STEAM Day taking part in an engineering workshop with the Smallpeice Trust, in which they had to build their own wind turbines using every day materials. This was followed by a whole school 'STEMester'; a term of activities designed to enhance our pupils' learning in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths through more hands on projects, problem-solving and industry-inspired workshops.



Keynote speaker Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE



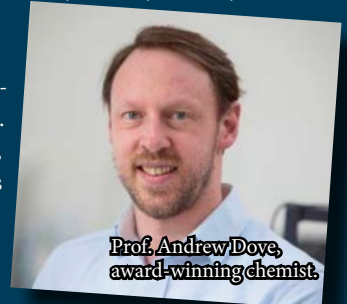


# ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

## LECTURES AND TALKS AT EHS

The EHS Academic Lecture Programme offers a broad range of thought-provoking talks from an eclectic mix of expert speakers and is an exciting opportunity to hear from some of the foremost thinkers in industry and business, science, the arts, the charity sector, and beyond.

Our first lecture of the year was taken by Professor Andrew Dove. Andrew is an award-winning professor of Chemistry who specialises in developing new Degradable Materials and Sustainable Polymers. He has studied and lectured at some of the best universities in the world, including Imperial College, London, and Stanford. He now leads a team of researchers at the University of Birmingham and his work in developing sustainable, environmentally friendly materials has earned him over 20 awards so far. His talk focussed on his current projects and some of their challenges.



Prof. Andrew Dove,  
award-winning chemist.



Mr Shabbir Mohamed,  
leading ophthalmologist

Our next lecture of the year was taken by Dr Shabbir Mohamed. Dr Mohamed is a leading ophthalmologist who specialises in treating many eye-related conditions such as cataracts, glaucoma, and ocular surface disease, among others. He is an innovator, developed creative ways of delivering care to his patients and carries out complex complex eye surgery and consultancy. Ophthalmology is known for being an extremely challenging form of medicine, which requires many years of dedication and perseverance. Dr Mohamed shared his experiences of his work, including details of some of the more challenging procedures he has carried out, and provided practical advice for aspiring medics.

In November, we were joined by Prof. Sophie Hatchwell, Lecturer in Art History at Birmingham University. Her lecture gave an overview of French, Spanish and German speaking artists as well as cultural references which appear on the MFL exams syllabus. This was an excellent opportunity for girls in year 10 and above, which also built upon the Art History program for years 7, 8 & 9.



Prof. Sophie Hatchwell, Lecturer  
in Art History



Miss Mullet with Sophie Barrett,  
EHS Old Girl

We have also been joined by EHS Old Girls, who have been keen to talk to our current students about their endeavours. Sophie Barrett (EHS 2011) returned to school to talk to pupils about her career pathway to becoming an Artistic Director, working in the television and film industry. During her engaging talk, she spoke about the value of making and using connections to gain work experience in the field and was a fantastic example for the girls.

Another Old Girl, Nadia Ismail, joined us to give an inspirational speech about the challenges of a career in aviation.

The school was also delighted to welcome Tamara from Deep Mind, a subsidiary of Google, to talk to the students about digital intelligence, her career after graduating with a degree in Computer Science and her current role as a software engineer. Tamara explained the history of digital intelligence and the role of women in a historically male-dominated industry. She had plenty of advice to offer regarding how to get started on this career path and the importance of work experience. This was followed later in the day by an informal Q and A session in which students had further discussions about the role and future of artificial intelligence, and the benefits of working in this industry.



Nadia Ismail,  
Old Girl

We were also very lucky to be joined by Hamish Scott, artist at Birmingham Royal Ballet, who performed two short extracts from the ballet. The first, 'Jack in the Box' from Act one, was a powerful and energetic character dance showcasing the 'toy' brought to life by Drosselmeyer. The second demonstration was the Princes variation from Act two, this also demonstrated considerable athleticism while combining the elegance and artistry of the Prince character.



Hamish Scott,  
Birmingham Royal Ballet

# ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

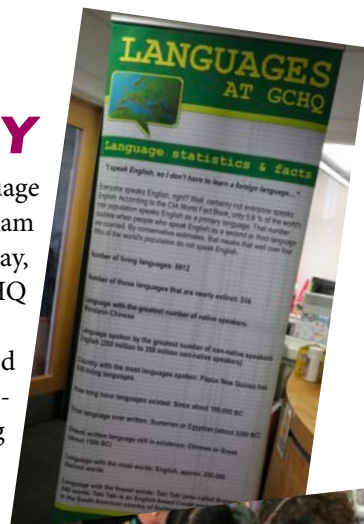
## LANGUAGE CHAMPIONS DAY

In November, EHS hosted a languages day for Year 10 pupils run by Business Language Champions in association with GCHQ. Pupils from six other schools including Uppingham School, Stafford Grammar and North Birmingham Academy, visited EHS for the day, along with staff from GCHQ, and the pupils were treated to a fascinating talk from GCHQ about how they use languages in their day to day work.

The pupils had a language taster session in either Arabic, Korean or Mandarin and took part in various language challenges in groups of six. These included giving a presentation in either French or German in front of a panel of judges, doing a code-breaking activity and inventing a board game linked to the work of GCHQ also in either French or German.

The girls all had a wonderful day and were challenged to step outside their comfort zone by the different activities. The two EHS teams both worked extremely hard on their challenges and came up with some original and inventive ideas. We were delighted when, at the end of the day, it was announced that our French team had won overall. The girls were awarded some fantastic prizes, including a GCHQ puzzle book signed by the director of GCHQ and a trip to Bletchley Park.

Congratulations to all our Year 10 pupils who took part in the day and who joined in with everything that was thrown at them with such enthusiasm!



## YEAR 9 EXPLORE OXFORD'S ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM



Girls in Year 9 were delighted to visit Oxford's famous Ashmolean Museum for a trip with a difference.

The day was made up of three main activities: a taught session from a museum representative, an artefact hunt around the museum itself and a walking tour to explore the beautiful city of Oxford.

The girls enjoyed the Ashmolean, relishing the opportunity to handle real Roman artefacts and ask the museum experts questions. They also got into the spirit of the artefact hunt with some girls getting very competitive! The walking tour was a great success too; the girls learnt about the Oxford collegiate system and saw famous landmarks such as the Radcliffe Camera and the covered market (Ben's Cookies was a big favourite of the day)!

Year 9 thoroughly enjoyed themselves and many of the girls are now inspired to consider Oxford as a future university destination.

## MOCK TRIAL TEAM SHOWS VALUE OF TEAMWORK



In January, pupils from Years 11 and 12 took part in the Independent Schools Mock Trials Competition at Birmingham Crown Court.

Throughout the day girls participated in a number of mock trial scenarios when competitors were required to either cross-examine, or play the role of a witness before a judge inside a courtroom. The roles of barristers and witnesses were played out by competing teams from each participating school.

The girls worked extremely hard and won two out of their three cases. The judges were also extremely complimentary, especially to our barristers, who had previously taken part in a workshop with a working Barrister to hone their skills.

The girls thoroughly enjoyed the day and gained valuable insights into court procedure and the day-to-day professional life of a barrister. Well done to all the girls for their diligence and teamwork!



# ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

## A BUZZ AT THE YEAR 7 SPELLING BEE



There was no let-up of pace for Year 7 as they took part in a Spelling Bee on the last day of the half term. The girls gathered in the Octagon as the dynamic Mr Skilbeck took to the mic to quiz his 'buzzing' competitors.

In houses, the girls were asked a series of quick-fire spellings on Science, Music and Languages, Art and Technology, Classics and Humanities. They were also asked by Mrs Ehiogu to define a plethora of words such as 'sublimation', 'nominative' and 'carbohydrate'.

The atmosphere was tense as representatives from St Francis and St David's drew on 13 points each. The lights were dimmed as one brave soul faced another in a tie-break question, resulting in the 2019 Spelling Bee Champions being announced as St Francis. Well done to all girls for taking part.

## Year 10 mark Black History Month



October marked Black History Month, and five of our Year 10 pupils, Abigail, Kimberly, Danielle, Nikita, and Aisha, decided to hold an assembly to celebrate and raise awareness of the annual observance.

The girls worked together to produce and deliver an excellent and thought-provoking assembly which covered some of the injustices black people have faced, inspiring black role-models, and why Black History Month is so important. They dealt with some sensitive issues with care and maturity, and were met with rapturous applause from the school. The assembly finished with a poem 'I Can't Breathe' by Ebony Delaney, which was beautifully read by Kimberly.

Well done girls; you did an excellent job!

## EHS 'STEMester'

This year, EHS decided to stretch out the STEAM day to a whole 'STEMester' of events, organised by the science and maths departments, and the Senior Teacher Academic Enrichment. This was kicked off with our EHS STEAM day which featured workshops from the Smallpeice Trust and the keynote speech with Anne-Marie Imafidon. Since then, we have organised events for students in all year

groups, such as a STEM film night in which students were treated to a showing of the excellent 'Hidden Figures' (advertised with a superb poster of made by our Art Scholars, and featuring some of our Science Scholars); We also carried out a science and maths "whodunnit" event in which students had to figure out a mystery using a series of clues left by staff.



## WORLD BOOK DAY CELEBRATIONS

EHS marked World Book Day with some exciting activities involving jelly beans, book 'prescriptions' (book recommendations) and book tokens.



Librarian Miss Lee handed out small pots of jelly beans as 'medicine' to add some sweetness to the day while also giving out the £1 book tokens for World Book Day. Any girl with a token could go to any participating bookstore and exchange the token for a free book shown on the front of the token. If they didn't see anything they fancied, they could use the token to take £1 off any book or audiobook of their choosing. Miss Lee also had some handy book prescriptions from Year 7, 8 and 9 that helped decorate the library for this special day!

The pupils and staff dressed up as various book-related characters and some as the physical books themselves! There was the World Book Day assembly, hosted by the librarian, Miss Lee, and her various helpers who did a wonderful job reading out all of the positive benefits of reading.

# OUTREACH AND CHARITY

Watch out for more charity events and follow us on Instagram for updates: @ehs\_charity

## EHS SUPPORTS BRUM CITY MISSION TOY LINK



Every Christmas, Birmingham City Mission gives gifts to thousands of children in our city, many of whom would otherwise not receive any Christmas presents. Thanks to the generosity of Birmingham's people the BCM Christmas toy distribution to families in need has been running successfully for 50 years.

EHS have been supporting this charity for the last two years and the City Mission have been so very grateful for the gifts donated by EHS pupils and staff. Last year a group of Year 10 pupils, supported by Miss O'Hare and Mr Wiggins, attended the mission and helped wrap gifts. Having visited this charity and seen first-hand the good that the organisation does, the pupils held a special assembly to stress the importance and the need of some of the local residents in a bid to encourage pupils to donate.

This plea, matched with the kindness and generosity of the EHS community, has seen even more toy donations come flooding into EHS. In December, Year 10 pupils again visited the mission and delivering the EHS donations.

We received an EHS record-breaking number of gifts and we thank everyone who kindly donated.

## WORKING TOGETHER: MISS SAIGON WORKSHOP

In November, Edgbaston High School for Girls played host to a special Miss Saigon workshop, working together with local schools.

We were delighted to welcome 120 enthused Year 5 and 6 pupils from St Georges C of E Primary and Chad Vale Primary School for a morning of Miss Saigon-themed activity. The morning involved participating in a Miss Saigon scene, experiencing the set and learning parts of the 'Morning of the Dragon' choreography.

The students were then offered the opportunity to be part of an audience that heard a selection of songs from our production of the show, performed by cast and staff of EHS. Finally, the pupils had the chance to ask the cast and production crew questions regarding Miss Saigon, their experience of performing and stage management. It was fantastic to hear that the visiting pupils loved the experience and we look forward to holding similar events in the future.



## DRAMA STUDENTS PERFORM AT SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL

Following two months of rehearsals, twenty Year 10 GCSE Drama students performed a unique adaptation of Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar' at the Midlands Arts Centre as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival.

The festival is a national event that encourages young people to take ownership of one play and to own both the language and staging of what can feel, at first, a difficult obstacle.

The students were given the opportunity to put forward their own ideas in relation to both how the play would sound as well as look. In true EHS spirit, the girls rose to the challenge with well-choreographed physical sequences as well as handling the complex choral speaking moments.

As well as performing at the Festival, the girls took part in a preparation workshop where they paired up with a local primary school, being facilitated by the Shakespeare Foundation to act as mentor and role model with the younger performers. This was extended to the performance night, being paired with another primary school to support their performances of The Tempest and Hamlet.

For some of us, some of the simplest staging moments can often be the most striking and effective. The Shakespeare Schools Foundation and members of the audience commented that two moments would 'stick in my mind for some time'; the unique use of ribbon to create Caesar's demise and the final moment where the two classes became a theatrical ensemble in the true sense of the word.





# REMEMBERING AN EHS OLD GIRL: PIONEER, SUFFRAGETTE, CAMPAIGNER

**D**r. Mary Darby Sturge, a former pupil at Edgbaston High School for Girls, was a pioneering campaigner who worked tirelessly for Birmingham and the local community.

Mary was in the first intake at Edgbaston High School for Girls but, as a woman, she was refused entry to the Medical School at Birmingham so instead studied at London School of Medicine. In 1895 she returned to Birmingham as only the second qualified woman doctor in the city and worked as an anaesthetist at the Birmingham and Midland Hospital for Women. There she met Professor John Taylor, a gynaecologist, after whom she named the Taylor Memorial Home which she helped found in 1910.

The Taylor Memorial Home was initially based in Sparkhill and provided end of life care for women suffering from gynaecological cancers. It was not until the 1970s, long after the home had moved to Erdington at the end of the Second World War, that men and people with non-cancer related terminal illnesses were admitted for care. The home became known as John Taylor Hospice in the early 1990s and launched community care, ensuring nurses could visit patients at home.

Mary was a member of the Management Committee for the Home from 1910 until her death in 1925. She supported many charitable causes but 'the one to which she was most devoted was undoubtedly the Taylor Memorial Home. From its inception she was its



enthusiastic supporter and helper.' (1924 Annual Report).

Mary was an innovator in so many ways. In 1923 she set up a pension fund for the home's nurses and, as the first President of the Medical Women's Federation (1920-1922), Mary campaigned for equal pay for women and for the removal of the marriage bar for women in medicine. She was also a member of the Birmingham Women's Suffrage Society.

Mary was kind and generous, especially towards her poorer patients to whom she would literally give the clothes off her back and the food from her table. Her generosity is still reflected in the charity she helped found. Today John Taylor Hospice provides care for hundreds of people at the end of their lives and its motto is every moment matters.

This is a special year for John Taylor Hospice as it celebrates its 110th anniversary with a host of events including a Secret Garden Ball, summer fayre and the Sunset Walk.

For more on the hospice, its 110th anniversary and Dr Darby Sturge see :  
[www.johntaylorhospice.org.uk](http://www.johntaylorhospice.org.uk)



# PREP NEWS

## MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR



After several weeks of preliminary auditions for the Prep Musician of the Year, the final took place in February, in the Octagon. We had 177 entrants in the competition and from these 20 were selected for the final performance. The girls showed their musical talent playing piano, flute, guitar, trumpet, violin, cello and singing.

The evening was introduced by our two Music Prefects, Samara and Lucy, who welcomed the audience and the

adjudicator, Swedish violinist Lisa Nyberg-Jackson. Lisa studied violin performance at Birmingham Conservatoire and at the Franz Liszt Hochschule fur Musik in Weimar. Lisa made her debut as a soloist with an orchestra at the age of 13 and now enjoys a busy freelance career mainly as a chamber musician in the Nero String Quartet.

The finalists from each year group performed their pieces and were then presented with certificates. After we had heard all four year groups from Years 3 - 6 Lisa withdrew to consider her decisions. During this time, last year's winner of the competition, Millie, performed two songs and she was joined by her sister Megan who also won the competition in 2016 playing the clarinet. The girls, who both attend EHS Senior School, entertained the audience with pieces from My Fair Lady and we are grateful that they joined us for the special evening.

On her return Lisa shared that she had not had an easy decision as everyone had performed extremely well. She did however announce the Year Group winners as: Anya in Year 3, Mabel in Year 4, Nitya in Year 5 and Samara and Lucy shared the Year 6 honours.

The overall Prep Young Musician award was presented to Risha, in Year 4, who played Bransle de la Torche on the piano.

Our very grateful thanks to all of the Music staff involved, to Lisa and, of course, to our young musicians.



## BEYOND THE CURRICULUM



The recent, 'Beyond the Curriculum' Day in Westbourne for our Nursery, Kindergarten and Reception children was spent writing and telling stories.

In Nursery they looked at a longer nursery rhyme, 'Sing a Song of Sixpence'. The girls acted out the rhyme and took photos of each section before putting them into a zigzag book to tell the story.

In Kindergarten, girls in K1 took it in turns to develop a class story. They then wrote the story as well as illustrating it too. K2 read the story of Goldilocks as their sound for the week was 'g'. Next they acted out the story using Props. They decided to change the ending of the story - the bears decided to be friends with Goldilocks and gave her a big hug. The girls then worked in small groups and used the photos of their acting to story scribe. All the girls had a go at writing part of the story and their work is displayed in the classroom.

Girls in Reception carefully planned their own stories at home with their parents. They enjoyed using these ideas to write their very own books in school during the 'Beyond the Curriculum Storytelling' day. They made excellent authors and illustrators!

In March, the Reception girls also tried out their carpentry skills, learning how to use screwdrivers, pliers and even a clamp!





# Pupils hit the right note on Choral Day



We were delighted to welcome children and staff from Chad Vale, Holywell and West House schools for a Choral Day in the Octagon to work with our Year 3 children. The Prep Choral Day workshops were led by Suzzie Vango, accompanied by Heather Howell on the piano.

Suzzie's high-energy vocal workshops have gained her an international reputation as a choral leader, working with children and adults on vocal projects across Asia, the USA, the UAE and Africa. She is highly experienced and skilled in directing, devising and delivering big sings, whole school singing days and teacher-training for national organisations. These include the BBC, Sing Up, St David's and Lichfield Music Festivals, Teach First and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Recent international highlights include whole school singing in International Schools in Uganda, Singapore and Thailand and an invitation to Dubai for the Middle East Choir of the Year Competition.

Many of the songs performed had been written by Suzzie and the workshops were full of interactive songs promoting physical engagement and opportunities for creativity and imagination. Everyone worked hard during the day learning a plethora of songs, which culminated in a concert for parents. It was clear how much the children had enjoyed themselves from their level of performance.

Our special thanks to Suzzie and Heather for all their inspiration and hard work in giving the children such an exciting musical experience and the staff from the four schools who helped to organise the event. We look forward to welcoming the children again for more musical events in future.

# Senior School Taster Morning



The Senior School welcomed Prep pupils from Year 6 to a special taster morning.

First, the girls enjoyed the music assembly, a Friday morning tradition in the Senior School, which was based on the music of a local Birmingham composer and enjoyed hearing Teresa, our Sixth Form Music scholar, play the piano.

After assembly, Year 6 were joined by pupils in Year 9 to take part in the 'Trading Game'. Girls enjoyed working together to create their shapes and girls learnt valuable trading tips! Break was then enjoyed in the Hexagon before Year 6 sampled a Chemistry lesson with either Dr Rajp or Miss Fones. The girls found making elephant toothpaste very interesting and they saw what happens if you combine oil, fire and water, resulting in some truly explosive scenes!

All of the Year 6 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their morning as they look ahead to their transition to secondary school.



## SPORTING SUCCESS

# *Amy is a British Champion and World Contender*

Amy's skills in Gymnastics have gone from strength to strength this academic year. After winning the Junior British Championships in late September, Amy secured a place at the World Junior TRA, TUM, DMT Championships in Tokyo which ran from the 5 – 8 December 2019.

At 16, Amy was the youngest competitor in her age group, which goes up to 21 years of age. Qualification on the first day of the competition saw Amy complete two solid passes that secured her a place in the final that evening. During the final, Amy attempted an audacious double transition which had the highest tariff in her group (6.8). She completed the pass with skill and determination, landing on her feet but stepping forward onto the track.



We are delighted to see Amy finally finish in 4th place, narrowly missing out on a medal position. This means that Amy ranks fourth in the world! This is an absolutely incredible achievement. Congratulations Amy, EHS is very proud of you!

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# *Asmita is a Badminton star*



Year 13 student Asmita has competed in the U19 World Junior Badminton Championships in Kazan, Russia. This tournament consisted of a five day team event followed by a week long individual event.

For the group stage in the team event, England were drawn to play Portugal, Sweden, Czech Republic and France. England came second in their group with two good wins against Portugal and Sweden and a close 3-2 loss to France.

England reached the play off stages competing for 9th to 12th position in the world. Asmita writes:

“In this play off we competed against Switzerland, Malaysia and India. It was amazing to play countries that dominate badminton and we finished a very creditable 11th place out of 32 countries that participated.

“The team event was followed by a culture day where we visited the local tourists sights in Kazan. It was nice to mingle with players from other countries.”

Following the team competitions, Asmita played women's doubles and mixed doubles in the individual event. She had a very close loss in women's doubles but went on to reach the third round in mixed doubles, beating Germany France and eventually losing to Malaysia.

“Overall it was an amazing experience and a privilege to represent my country. As I am still a year young for this age group hopefully next year I can look to push on further in the tournament and use all my experience to do better”.

Well done, Asmita, everyone at EHS is very impressed and proud!



## SPORTING SUCCESS

### SHEAU-EN WINS GOLD

**Y**ear 9 pupil Sheau-En competed in the Skate Southern Club International at Lee Valley Ice Centre, London.

She performed alongside 34 other girls from the UK and around the world. Dancers were required to complete a 2.5 min dance on the ice, executing specific technical elements to earn points towards their final score.

We are delighted to report that Sheau-En was placed in first position, winning a Gold medal for her efforts!

What first started as a hobby for Sheau-En as a 7 year old has clearly developed into a real passion and she has certainly demonstrated that she has a flair for the sport, and great promise for the future, with this latest win under her belt.

We look forward to hearing more about Sheau-En's successes on the ice as she prepares to take part in further competitions later in the season.



### Sisters take on the Unity Games

**D**uring the Christmas holidays, sisters Hawra and Abida were given an opportunity to play netball as part of a community sports festival in Dubai. Hawra gives her account of a fantastic experience of friendly sporting rivalry and the forging of new friendships.

"The Unity Games takes place once every four years in Dubai. It is a community tournament which brings global members of our community together to strengthen bonds of friendship. This really was the case and we created bonds that will last a lifetime.

"We were very kindly welcomed by a team from Essex and began training with our squad in Autumn. We quickly gelled and were ready to take on our competition when we got to Dubai.

"After much anticipation, the opening ceremony took place on Christmas Eve, where we met teams participating in a variety of sports such as football, badminton, table tennis and volleyball. Over 750 participants and supporting family members took part in these events and came from a variety of cities: Mombasa and Nairobi in Kenya, Mwanza and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania,

Toronto, Mumbai and Orlando to name but a few. The evening was filled with food, laughter and nerves for the upcoming competition.

"The next four days were packed with matches, unique team chants, a few minor injuries but lots of fun. The atmosphere was incredible, and it was an experience that we will never forget. We played competitively and made it to the semi-finals, where we only lost to the two eventual finalists, Stanmore Jaffery Queens and Dubai Slayers. We were disappointed not to win, but proud of our team's performance and progress.

"Sunday 29 December saw the closing ceremony, where all of our achievements were celebrated. We were pleasantly surprised to learn that I had won the award for Most Valuable Netball Player of the tournament and that our Essex team had won the prize for Best Discipline on court (which came with a lovely cash prize!).

"A huge thank you to the PE Department and our netball club, Grasshoppers, for always encouraging my sister and I in our netball pathways and to our Essex team, without whom none of this incredible experience would have been possible."

Hawra, Year 13





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