

# Da Vinci Academy Showcase 2020/2021



Da Vinci Academy  
A L.E.A.D. Academy





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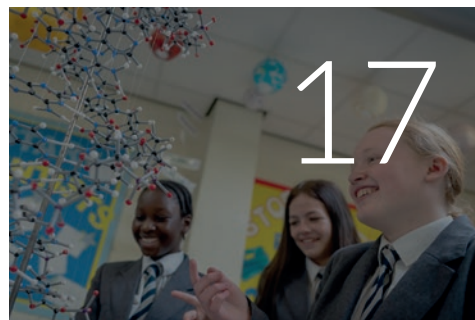
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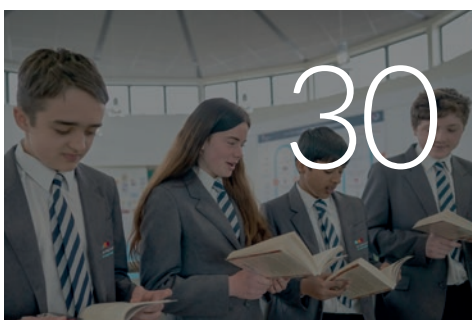
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# A Message From Our Headteacher



I am always proud as Headteacher of Da Vinci Academy but none more so than on the back of this last year. The worldwide pandemic has challenged our families and school like never before. Our 'Da Vinci Academy Showcase' celebrates all that everyone has achieved despite Covid-19. Our ongoing success and improvement adventure is a testimony to our amazing students, a strong academy-family partnership, and the brilliant staff team. It is important that we all take a moment to recognise and reflect on our successes and feel good about what we are achieving together.

Da Vinci Academy is described as a 'proudly inclusive school with a big heart and huge ambition'. Our mission of 'one team, changing worlds' captures the way that we all work together for the benefit of our young people and therefore in turn, they will 'change the worlds' of people around them in their future careers and lives. An unapologetic and relentless pursuit of the highest standards has seen record breaking GCSE outcomes as well as full school rolls in our younger years. We support children to discover how amazing they are, develop their talents and celebrate that everyone is different. We are so incredibly proud of them and all that we are achieving together. I hope in turn that you are too.

We all look forward to a future full of collaboration, resilience, happiness and success. We truly are 'Da Vinci and proud'.

Enjoy the read!

**Mrs Katie Roberts**  
Headteacher



## With thanks to...

All the students and staff for their contributions.

Produced by Gemma Wilkinson  
Edited by Engaging Education  
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and Miro Photography



# Year 11 Reflections

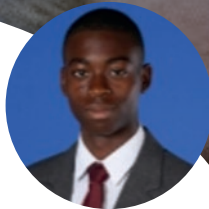


In the course of the last academic year, there have been some dramatic changes with interesting developments. In spite being in an epidemic, the administration of Da Vinci Academy prioritises the health, wellbeing and education of its pupil's by always standing at the forefront to implement safety measures prescribed by the government alongside maintaining disruption free classes which guarantees learning with no deficiencies, so students are ensured of attaining their educational goals.

I am proud to freely state anywhere that I have been to Da Vinci Academy because it's a place where students are specially inculcated with good morals and discipline which I deem indispensable for students who are eager to receive the support they need.

Many thanks from the prefect team to all our staffs who worked relentlessly to mould us and ensure that Da Vinci Academy remains "one team, changing worlds."

**Divine**  
Head Boy



To Mrs Roberts and the Team:

Thank you for giving me the chance at this school, you're all legends and I will miss you.

**Year 11 Leaver**



My time at Da Vinci has been insane and I know that we as students are extremely lucky to have teachers who are there when you need them and will go to extraordinary lengths to get you where you need to be, whether it's a college placement or helping you to access Microsoft Teams in an epidemic. All the teachers at Da Vinci Academy work together to ensure that all students feel safe and secure in school. I'm glad, I can say that I studied at Da Vinci Academy because the time I have spent there was an amazing and unforgettable period of time.

Thanks to the teachers I've been taught and supported by, I will never forget the wisdom shared in the walls of Da Vinci Academy.

**Kaylea**  
Head Girl



A massive "THANK YOU!" to every member of staff.

On behalf of the entire year group, we say thank you to all the members of staff at Da Vinci Academy. We fully recognise your abundant dedication and commitment to doing your job that has aided us to achieve to the best of our abilities.

We believe that without you at Da Vinci Academy, we would not have reached the heights we did or achieve our educational goals. We assure you that come what may, your labour of love towards each and every one of us will forever abide in the depths of our hearts.

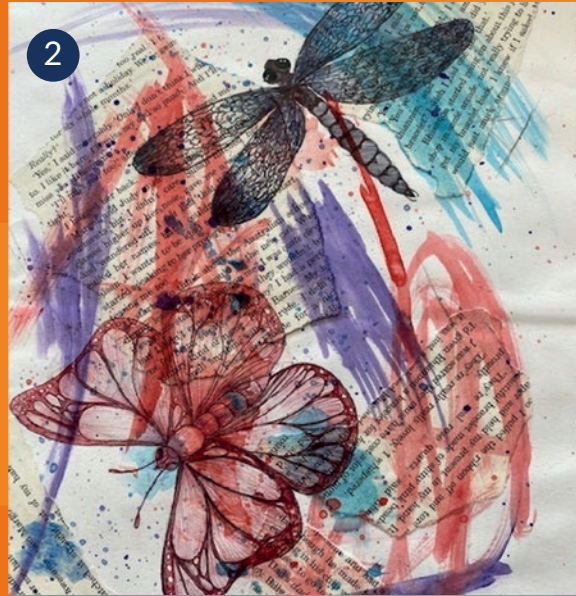
It has been our greatest pleasure to learn and grow through the extraordinary knowledge you inculcated us with. Once again, we say thank you.

**Year 11 Prefect Team**

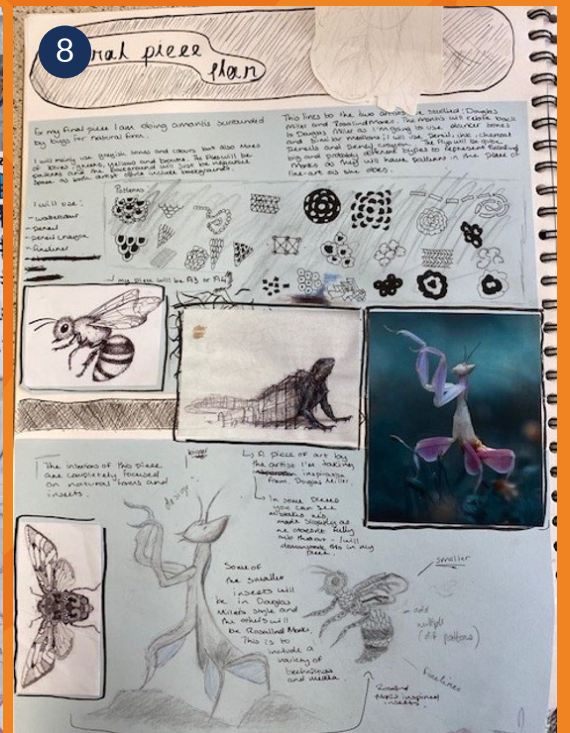
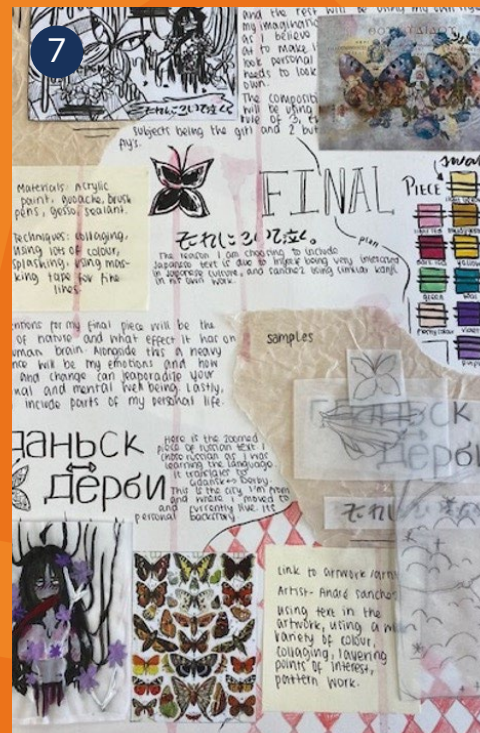
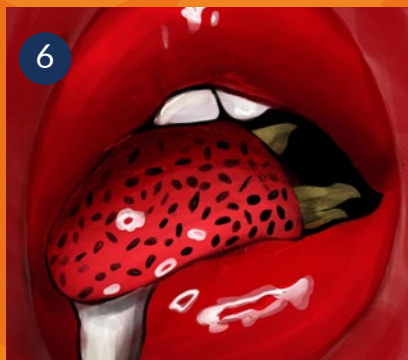


# The Arts

## Art Gallery



- 1 – Morgan, Year 11
- 2 – Morgan, Year 11
- 3 – Faith, Year 8
- 4 – Latae, Year 7
- 5 – Amanda, Year 11
- 6 – Latae, Year 7
- 7 – Zoe, Year 10
- 8 – Moneet, Year 10





# Food and Nutrition

## Cooking Club

Year 8 students were delighted to see the return of our extra-curricular cooking club. Each week students worked with Miss Quinn to find either a challenging technical recipe or one that could be modified for a specific audience. Miss Quinn has been really impressed with the development of skills shown.

## KS3 Cooking

It has been amazing to see our students back in the kitchen developing their practical skills.

### Year 7

Students have been focusing on health and safety in the kitchen, learning the key practical skills needed to cook safely. We started by learning the bridge and claw method; now we have secure chopping skills we have been able to use them to make dips and fruit salad. During theory lessons, Year 7 have been developing their knowledge of The Eatwell guide and learning how to ensure we have a healthy, balanced diet.

### Year 8

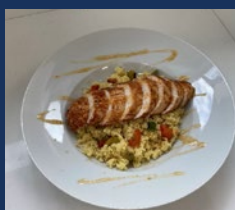
Students have been focusing their studies on Food Provenance. We have been developing our knowledge around how foods can be sourced, sustainable farming methods, food miles and fair trade. In the kitchen we have been developing our basic skills and techniques by preparing and cooking more complicated recipes including bread, fish cakes and roux sauces.

### Year 9

During lockdown, Year 9 focused on the topic Food Choice. Students explored the factors which can affect food choice, modified recipes and planned a diet to suit specific needs. Since returning to school, we have completed food science experiments, gained a deeper understanding of Macro and Micronutrients and completed a Multicultural project. Students were able to research a country of their own choice and find out about different cultures. Countries from Vietnam to Mexico were studied and after preparing their own recipes some excellent dishes were produced and presented.

## Year 11

This year our Food and Nutrition GCSE brief was based around Street food, they had three months to research everything there is to know about street food and plan a two-course meal, squeezed into a 20 page essay. Each student selected a different country to study, a wide range of cuisines were chosen to showcase their skills. They endured several weeks of practicing dishes, modifying recipes and drafting the extensive time plans before they had three hours to prepare, cook and present their dishes alongside keeping their area clean and tidy! This was followed by a taste test from some voluntary teachers which enabled us to evaluate and complete our coursework. The students put their all into ensuring they selected appropriate dishes from their chosen cuisine which showed not only high levels of presentation but a fantastic level of complex skill. Although very challenging, it was an enjoyable experience and all students exceeded our high expectations.





## Year 10 - Tunnocks Teacake Challenge

What a busy year it has been for Year 10, we have been working hard to develop a range of complex practical skills this year including making fresh pasta, mincing meat and deboning/ portioning chicken to mention a few. They have focused on organisation, time keeping and presentation in preparation for their 3 hour practical examination next year. To support our progress with presentation, students completed the Tunnocks Teacake Challenge. The challenge is to take one Tunnocks teacake and plate it up, showing as many technical cooking skills along side sublime presentation within a set time period. The students really pulled out all the stops, producing creatively designed desserts.



## Creative Writing

Here at Da Vinci Academy, we pride ourselves on our curriculum in English because it provides students with such a great opportunity to learn about the incredibly diverse literary canon. In Year 7, our students learn about narrative and about how stories are told, studying everything from Greek Mythology and Beowulf to Romeo and Juliet and Oliver Twist. In Year 8, our students are given the opportunity to learn all about literary genres including the Gothic genre, literature from other cultures and dystopia. Finally, in Year 9, our students begin to learn about modernism and study a whole range of texts from Blood Brothers to Anita and Me as well as looking at big themes like tragedy and gender. In studying these topics, students are given the chance to read widely, debate and discuss issues and ideas that arise from literature and develop confidence in their own ability to communicate effectively.

### GREEK MYTHS AND ANCIENT LEGENDS

YEAR 7 UNIT 1



### Introduction to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel: A Study of Oliver Twist

YEAR 7 UNIT 4



Unit 3

The Struggle for Identity in Modern Literature: Anita and Me



## Creativity in English

Each week our KS3 students have a "challenge lesson" that allows them to write creatively about a wide range of concepts and ideas. The students really enjoy these lessons as it gives them the freedom to write stories that interest them and also allows them to voice their opinions on a range of topics. Please see overleaf for a short story written by one of our Year 9 students, Kiera, where they have used a video stimulus as an inspiration for a piece of writing.



## ‘Eye of the Storm’ – Keira, Y9

As I looked out of the gleaming spyglass, I noticed that the ‘eye’ was fast approaching, maybe a day or so until contact. My ragged overcoat twisted and folded in the wind. In the mist of the cloud ridden sky the luminescent sun peaked through while my scaly friends methodical green eyes seemed to dart in search of something, I’ve been able to figure what was going on in her mind. Spikes littered upon her nape and back while her majestic wings were folded ever so elegantly against her sides.

I set a course before I patted her on the head and left her be. While on my way to the fire chamber, I double checked I was on track (in which I was, what can I say I’ve been running errands like this for decades). I picked up a carefully etched bottle that was filled with a coruscating green liquid. I have had it for ages, I guess now is the time to put it to use. As I throw it in, the fire ignites in a scintillating lime green blaze. I proceed to pick up anything that has any connotations to my past anything that could hold me back, anything that could make me second guess my mission at hand and throw it into the raging inferno. The rustic cogs that I have tended and oiled for so long pick up speed but still interlocking and turning perfectly without flaw.

I plucked the old varnished, silver dawned box and gazed at the contents for a final time, them illuminating my face in a wondrous golden glow. It made me think of all the campfires we had back home, wow how long have I been gone? Snapping out of my second guessing I take one last stroll with what importance I have left, my threadbare scarf winding in the wind. Reaching the ends of the deck I say one last goodbye and drop it into the void of clouds below, sending it ‘headfirst’ into the abyss. A raindrop falls onto my steampunk style goggles and trickles down the glass, I guess the weather really does know feelings. If anyone were here they’d know for sure that I shed that tear, my mother always said the weather seemed to show all truths and emotions.

I soon hit the storm, indicating I was edging closer to the ‘eye’. Cracks of mesmerizing lighting drew me in as the rumbling calls of the thunder coaxed me in, I guess that air shipman’s craze was a thing all along. The abounding rain fell at a rapid pace, ricocheting off the glass of my airship. After god knows how long of fighting with that wheel the flame of my lantern blew out at this point I was impoverished.

All I can recall is waking up slouched over the wheel and that I’d successfully passed through the storm. I suppose that the lantern blowing out was a lovely foreshadow that the storm has passed (but not necessarily over). I finally see what I’ve journeyed all the way here for, the green flicker of hope, and the eye of the storm. I turn to prepare myself and the ship for the now inevitable end, only to stumble upon the key for my dearest’s chains. I crouch down and retrieve it from the worn, cracked, bespoke planks of my deck, wander over to my dearest “It’s about time, hey dear” I say as I insert the intricate key into the padlocks of her shackles. She nods a last goodbye and flies off into the rolling clouds.

I loop strings around the wheel to keep us on course, pull the lever and pump full steam ahead towards the eye. ‘One last thing for the preparation’ I think to myself as I voyage over to the opposite side of the rustic ship. I sit in that chair I reserved for a moment like this, spin around to gaze out of the convolutedly made glass window piece. And say my very last goodbye, to a world that’s our own.



### Using an image to inspire a piece of description

The sun rose upon the countryside, rays of glistening light bouncing from surface to surface until the whole meadow radiated. The lush green grass that blanketed the ground swayed in the cool breeze, littering the floor with a variety of emerald greens. The scenery was a sight to behold; the hilly landscape looked as if mere brush strokes on a canvas, and Mother Nature as the painter. Among all of this nature stood an old, run-down farm that quivers in its former glory. What once was a top notch material producer has since dwindled into an abandoned, crumbling building that has been de-faced by the unforgiving sounds of time. **Jack, Y8**



# Modern Foreign Languages

Despite the challenges of lockdown, both Madame Heltorp and Madame Jandu are very proud of the work our students have produced this year in French. We would like to take this opportunity to showcase our students' efforts here, showing an array of student work from Year 7 to Year 11 to provide a glimpse of the learning journey French students undertake here at Da Vinci.

For many of our students, their first French lesson in Year 7 is the first time they have ever studied French in school. From mastering the basics of introductions, numbers, and other key vocabulary, students quickly develop to write more extensively describing themselves and others, and giving their opinion on free time activities.

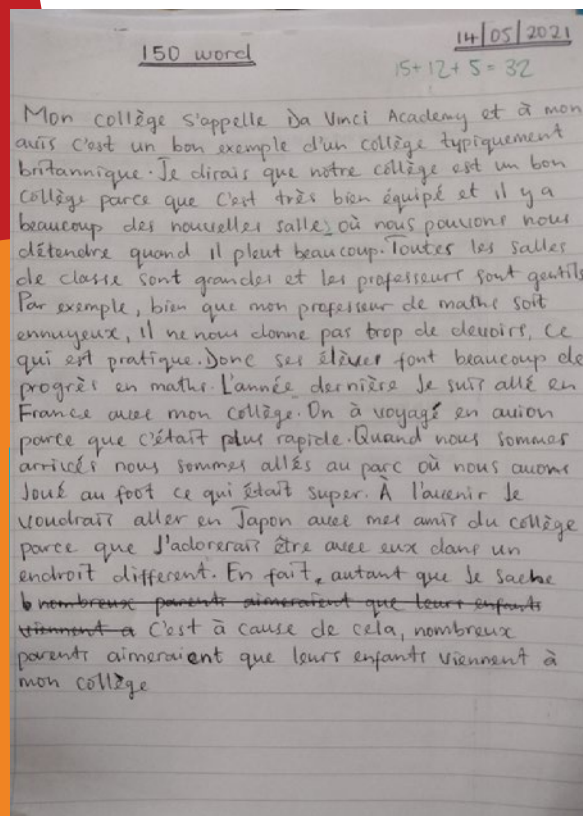
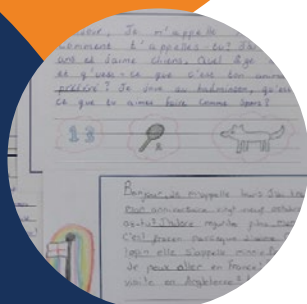
In Year 8 and 9, students expand the range of topics they can understand and discuss, ranging from talking about holidays, ambitions for their future careers, health and sport, and even environmental issues. Some of our Year 8 students have even been sending postcards to students in France!

At GCSE level, students develop their skills in listening, reading, speaking and writing to produce more extended, detailed and complex pieces of work. Year 11 have worked especially hard this term to produce their coursework; I have included one of Head Boy Divine's full mark essays here as an example (with English translation), written about Da Vinci itself.

This year, one of our Year 11 students, Hannah, was selected to take part in an online languages masterclass programme, which ran throughout the year by tutors at Cambridge University. Hannah described the course as "an eye-opening experience", giving an insight of what it is like to study languages at one of the world's most prestigious universities.



At Da Vinci, we believe an understanding and appreciation of French culture is an important part of the language learning process. As such, as part of the extra-curricular activities ran after school, students have had the opportunity to watch and discuss a selection of French films and expand their cultural horizons.



## Translation

"My school is called Da Vinci Academy and in my opinion it is a good example of a typically British secondary school. I would say that our school is a good school because it is very well equipped and there are lots of new rooms where we can relax when it rains a lot. All the classrooms are big and the teachers are kind. For example, although my maths teacher can be boring sometimes(!), he gives us practical homework, so his students make a lot of progress in maths. Last year, I went to France with my school. We travelled by plane because it was faster. When we arrived we went to the park where we played football, which was super. In the future, I would like to go to Japan with my school friends because I would love to spend time with them somewhere different. Because of all this, many parents would like their children to attend my school."



# Da Vinci's Got Talent – Christmas Special

The Music Department's highlight for this year had to be our very own Da Vinci's Got Talent Christmas Special!

So much talent, so much hard work and so much enthusiasm culminated in an amazing event which demonstrated how fantastic our students can be when they work in the Da Vinci One Team way. With COVID regulations meaning we could not have a 'live' audience, the whole school community – students, teachers and support staff – had the unique opportunity of virtually viewing this year's wonderful event and were able to vote for the overall winner.

Throughout the Autumn term the Year 10 BTEC music group worked tirelessly, in what were obviously very difficult and challenging circumstances, to bring the event together and felt immense pride in what they eventually achieved.

Obviously, all those taking part were winners; however, as with all competitions, after the ballots were collected and votes counted a clear favourite emerged within the school community, with this year's Da Vinci's Got Talent overall winner going to one of our exciting younger vocalists, the Year 7 contestant, Trady-Leigh! Runners up were the wonderful Year 11 duo, with the excellent Jessica claiming third place.

A special mention and thank you went to Natalia for all her hard work and incredible organisational skills. So too to Dominic Fearn, in our I.T. department, for filming the event and overseeing the lighting and sound.

So finally, congratulations all those who took part this year and thank you to everyone who made such a massive effort to make the event happen so successfully - Let's all look forward to DGT 2021!

## Young Voices Biggest Sing

On 15 June 2021, 37 Year 7 students added their voices to the record-breaking chart topper, Young Voices Biggest Sing, supporting children's mental health. Young Voices Biggest Sing had hundreds of thousands of children, their teachers and families coming together all over the UK, the US and the rest of the world in the safety of their schools to sing the iconic song 'Lovely Day' by Bill Withers with special guest artists to raise vital funds in support of Place2Be, their chosen charity for 2021. There were over 356,000 people joining the event alongside Billy Ocean, who was singing live at the O2, in London. We were very excited about this event, sharing our voices with many people around the world and having our names go down in history!





# Sport



## BTEC Breakfast

The PE department ensured that the Year 10 BTEC SPORT group had a “brain food” breakfast prior to their Unit 1 Theory examination in May. Lots of fresh fruit, orange juice, pain au chocolat and cereal bars to help the students mindset and ensure they were fully prepared for their examination.

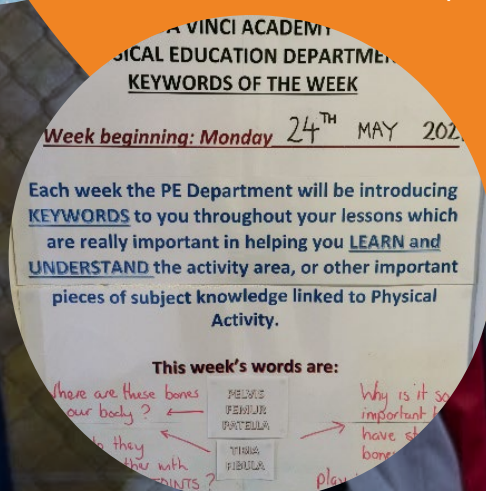
## PE Postcards

Every week, members of the PE department have sent out rewards postcards to students within the Academy who have worked really hard during their 2 weekly PE lessons. Well done to all students who have received one so far (over 200 students!). If you haven't received one yet..... Can you aim to receive one from September 2021?



## Word Wall

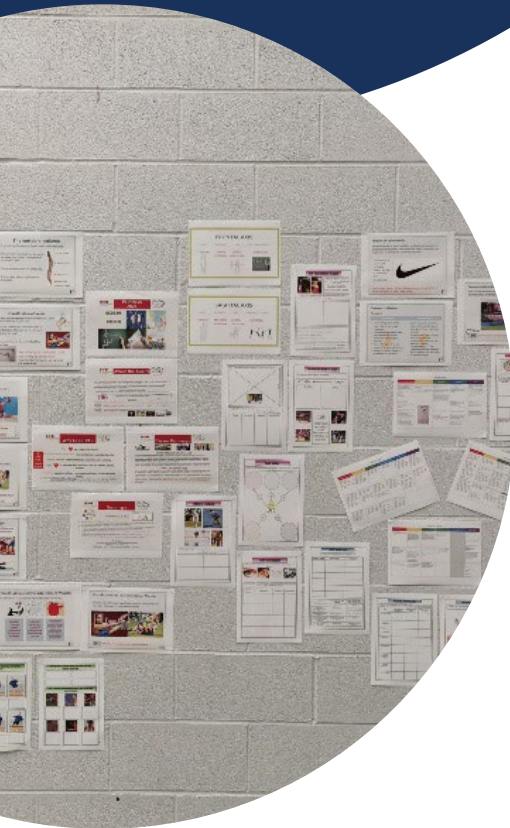
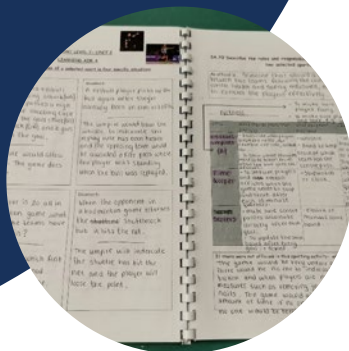
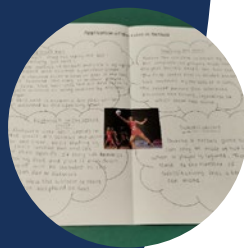
Each week from January, we have 4-5 “keywords” that we want the students to focus on during their lessons. It could be components of fitness, bones or muscles in the body, training methods or how to warm up before activity.





## Year 10 Btec Sport Unit 2 Students Work

As part of the BTEC SPORT course in Year 10, students have completed Learning Aims A, B and C in order to try and achieve the highest grade possible in this Unit. Here is some work from a student who has had to describe the governing bodies, rules and regulations of their 2 selected sporting activities as well as the role of the officials in each.

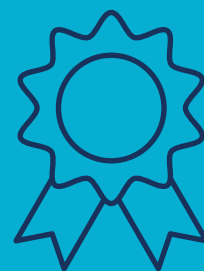


## GCSE And BTEC Sport Wordwall

As part of the process for Year 9 Pathways this year, the PE Department created a "Word wall" in the Sports Hall in order to support students with their choices, but to also give them a clear indication of what to expect if they choose to study either of the Sports Related courses in Year 10.



## Year 7 - 11 Sportspersons Of The Week



Since September 2020, every week during a half term, the PE staff have nominated students from their classes who have gone above and beyond in their lessons. This could include effort, enthusiasm, engagement, progress, attitude to learning - or just generally participating to the best of their ability.

Every Thursday or Friday, those nominated come down to PE to receive a Hot Chocolate, medal and certificate. This is then displayed throughout the half term in the PE corridor. Look at the winners from the different year groups during the last half term.

## Fitness - Kettlebells

This year, the PE department has made "Fitness" an option for students in Year 10 or 11. Activities have included circuit training, resistance bands workouts, body pump and as you can see, kettlebells. The students have really embraced the classes and pushed themselves to improve their levels of endurance, strength and stamina.

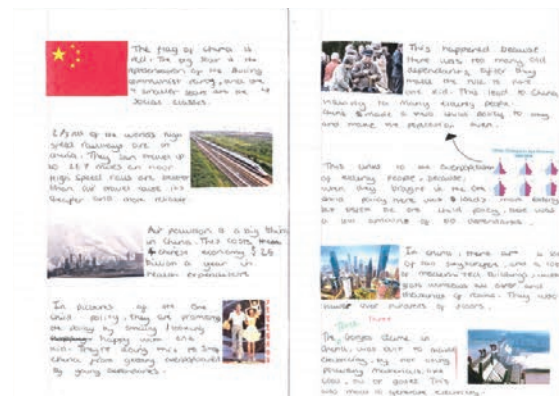




# Humanities

## Geography

In Geography, we enable our students to develop powerful knowledge about our world and challenge the ways they think about it. We have revamped the curriculum at both KS3 and KS4 to include a deeper knowledge of places and have added topics that give our students a well-rounded world view. We open their eyes to the possibilities available to them in our amazing world, and prepare them for the future with skills that can be applied in further studies and life after education.



Some of the new units that we have studied in Key Stage 3 this year include Amazing Places, Glacial and Geomorphological features, and China. In Year 9, we have investigated how China has quickly developed its high speed rail capabilities, and how this is being used to limit pollution problems in the world's most populated country. Year 7 are explaining how a modern global city such as Dubai and a shanty town such as Dharavi (Slumdog Millionaire) can both be called 'amazing'!



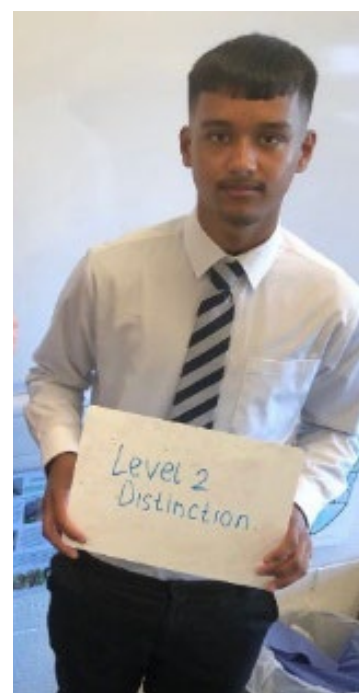




Virtual fieldtrips were used to complete fieldwork this year. Year 11 students undertook shopping research over MS Teams comparing places such as Nottingham Road, Park Farm in Allestree and Derbion for their features, pedestrian flows, and the goods and services available. We look forward to fieldwork resuming for the students presently in Year 10 during their final year at school.

## Our World, Our Environment

We have recently launched 'Our World, Our Environment' – an open invite club focussing on discovering distant places and significant world issues such as Climate Change. This is a student led club where students have identified places and topics that they want to find out more about. Locations we have looked at have included Brazil and the Rainforest; Dubai and ways to save our planet and our animals. Students attending the club designed posters showing what is important to them. These posters were judged by a student vote. The winning entry from Paige and runner-up entry from Meah:



In January students sat their BTEC Travel and Tourism examination, we were delighted with the 100% pass rate of our students. Notable congratulations go to Mehraj for achieving a Distinction, and Syd, Roshveen, Ellie and Jamie for achieving Merits.

# History

History is a well-established and much beloved part of our curriculum offer at Da Vinci Academy. We have continually been developing our provision in this subject and this year has seen exciting developments in all year groups.

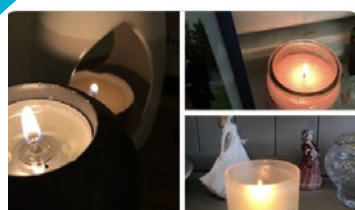
Year Seven have studied the early beginnings of English history. Firstly looking at the positive impacts made to Britain by migration, they have then assessed the significance of the year 1066 in English history. Students have developed their understanding of how William came to power and established control over England. Historical reasoning skills have been used to model a castle that would be fit to defend from an attack. Students had to justify their architectural choices!

In Year 8 students have been studying a diverse range of historical topics; from the Tudor monarchs to the Industrial Revolution. Students found the impact of Derby on The Industrial Revolution particularly interesting. Walks around the Darley Abbey Mills area were suggested for students as a form of exercise during the January – March lockdown.

We were honoured to have been selected as a school to participate in the University College London Holocaust Beacon School Programme. All of our KS3 and Year 10 students have benefitted from this provision during weekly character sessions; Year 9 have also experienced our brand new scheme of learning for Holocaust Education. As part of this programme we have been gifted a set of new books, available in the library, for students to read on the subject of Holocaust education from the perspective of a Holocaust survivor who was moved to the Lake District in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Connor in Year 9 said, "the book provided me with a good opportunity to think about what I had studied in class and how young people were impacted by this historical event".

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day this year was 'be a light in the darkness'. To commemorate this event, Ms Kay asked for photographs of candles lit by the school community as an act of reflection.

Year Seven have also benefitted from our extra-curricular offering: "History's Mysteries". These dedicated historians have taken it upon themselves to unravel some of history's toughest puzzles. They have also begun documenting details about life in 2021 in their very own time capsule!



## GCSE History

Our GCSE historians have shown great resilience this year, learning in what has been unprecedented times. Our Year 10 cohort have been focusing on their core modules of Conflict and Tension and Elizabethan England.

Our Year 11 groups have been busy preparing themselves for the GCSE assessments. As part of this they had to study a specialist 'Historic Environment' module which this year was based on Kenilworth Castle, a large, spacious estate that was gifted to Robert Dudley by Elizabeth the First shortly after she came to power. Our Year 11's enjoyed a virtual tour of the castle. The final piece of work that they had to produce for this module was an essay on the purpose of stately homes in Elizabethan England:

"The main reason as to why Elizabethan stately homes were built was for the owners comfort and pleasure, this is seen in the case study of Kenilworth Castle. When the Earl of Leicester received Kenilworth from Elizabeth he invested £40,000 into the reconstruction and development of the castle. He built a brand new building, Leicester's Building, which housed Elizabeth's personal chambers for when she came to stay. These chambers were built for Elizabeth's ultimate comfort and they were very luxurious. The first veranda in England was built for her so that she could enjoy the splendour of the Kenilworth Gardens from her own private chambers. Therefore, comfort was a primary motivation as to why stately homes were built in Elizabethan England." – Sarah, Year 11



# RE

We continue to develop this subject as a core part of the humanities offer at Da Vinci Academy. This year, students in Years 7 to 9 have embarked on a new RE course which seeks to help students learn about different religions, and reflect upon what they teach. From the Sikh concept of community through to Christian beliefs about duty and vocation, we can all learn something from the major world religions, whether we are followers of them or not. Not only do students study the Abrahamic traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, they also learn about Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism, as well as the beliefs of humanists (such as David Attenborough) and non-believers in the context of concepts such as creation.



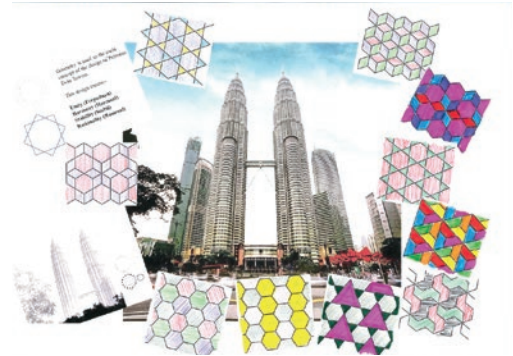
## Moral Issues in Religious Education – Year 9

In Year 9, students have been investigating how religious arguments can be used to help people answer 'big questions'. Some such questions which we have studied have been whether nuclear war can ever be justified, and how quotes from the Bible can be used to both justify and argue against the death penalty. It is important for students to learn that such 'big questions' usually don't have one right or wrong answer, just that one's personal opinions can be justified well or badly!



## Religious Art and Architecture - Year 8

In this unit, students have investigated different religious buildings and what makes them special to believers. We have looked at how geometric patterns inspire Islamic art and how Michelangelo created the frescos on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. We investigated the latter by taking a virtual field trip to the Vatican and zooming-in on his magnificent work.



## Religious Education in Relationships and Sex Education – Years 9 and 10

The Humanities team were delighted to contribute heavily to the Inspiration Day activities for Years 9 and 10 about healthy relationships. Mr Cook delivered interesting sessions on marriage, Ms Kay on consent, and Mr Harris on contraception. It is very important for students to learn about the different religious, moral, and social aspects of these issues and students fed-back that it was done in a thought-provoking and engaging way.

# STEM

## Science

The science department consists of eight highly qualified and enthusiastic teachers with a genuine passion for the wonders of science. Not only will we challenge you to think and appreciate scientific phenomenon, but we will encourage you to be critical of scientific procedures and results from investigations. The department is well resourced and staff are encouraged to try out experiments and demonstrations with the support of the world's greatest science technician.



### Lessons in Science

This year we have had to be adaptable and learn to teach in new ways. Home learning has certainly presented itself with challenges which both staff and students have overcome, and some have even thrived in. During lockdown we received some wonderful examples of posters, animations and models. In addition, during one month, Hannah in Year 11 had answered the second most questions correctly on an online revision platform on the entire planet!

Now we are back in classrooms, teachers are certainly making up for lost time, including more demonstrations, experiments and dissections.



## Student Voice

Science continues to be a very popular subject at Da Vinci. Here is what some of our keenest scientists have had to say about the subject:



Science is fascinating and I love working things out. The best thing we have done this year is learning about energy stores and that the total energy in the universe now is the same as it was billions of years ago.



Science is so interesting. Our teachers show us how science is linked to almost everything, and I've loved learning about how things work. My favourite is Biology, I've loved learning about the different systems of the human body and how they work together.



I love my science lessons, my teacher is very helpful and funny. We have learned that everything is made of atoms which are really, really small and I can't wait to do lots of chemical reactions next year.



I really like science because we have fun experiments and practical's in lessons. The teachers are really helpful and get really excited about the bits that they like too.



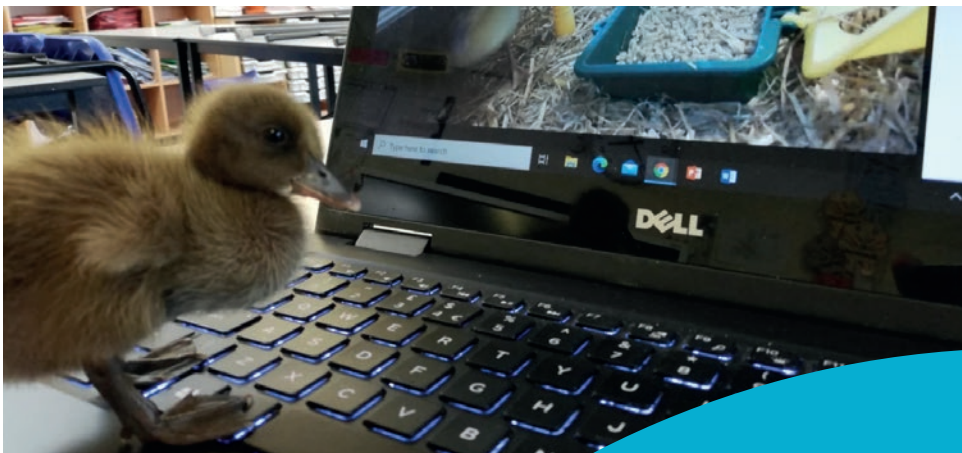
## BOOM Town

Despite the limits put in place restricting the practical elements of science, we have been able to launch Boom Town, our "just for fun" extra-curricular science club. Throughout the year, Year 8 students have been very lucky to have had the opportunity to complete some exciting, extra science investigations and watch awesome and some electrifying demonstrations. They have completed a number of different experiments including making copper sulfate crystals, collapsing cans using Bunsen Burners and copper plating Mr James's house keys. They have made lava lamps, played with the Van De Graaff generator, and grown bacteria on agar plates collected from the other dirty departments. The demonstrations have included a lot of fire and explosions such as making a fire snake, making a jelly baby scream (by burning, mwuh ha ha ha!) and of course the very impressive thermite reaction. We've mixed a variety of chemicals together to form a black column of carbon, cannon fire and elephant's toothpaste which may have stained the ceiling... whoops. Most sessions have ended with a rendition of the elements of the periodic table song, wonderful stuff! The Year 8 students have been very enthusiastic. Mr James and Cynthia have loved discovering and practicing some of the fantastic experiments which do not normally fit in with the standard curriculum model.

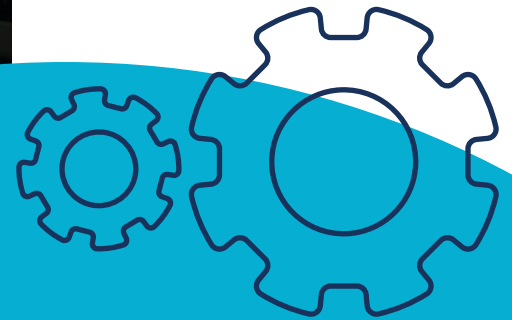


## Ducks

May saw the arrival of some very special guests to the science department. To the great excitement of students, and staff alike, six duck eggs arrived at Da Vinci. Over the next few days five eggs hatched. The hatching was watched over the live webcam feed and in school and we welcomed Noodle, Gertrude (A.K.A Donovan Ricketts), Peanut, Lucky and Pickle to the science family. Lucky was appropriately named as he needed assistance hatching. After multiple YouTube tutorials, Miss Fernandes helped Lucky by picking off bits of stubborn shell it was unable to peck at, had he been a wild duckling, he would not have survived! Pickle was not to be outshone, after hours of sleeping, she decided to start hatching at 5 o'clock on Friday afternoon after Mr James had left with the other four ducks for the weekend. Thankfully he drove back for her and she got to join her brothers and sisters. Once back in school, lots of students and staff enjoyed holding, bathing and watching the ducks play.

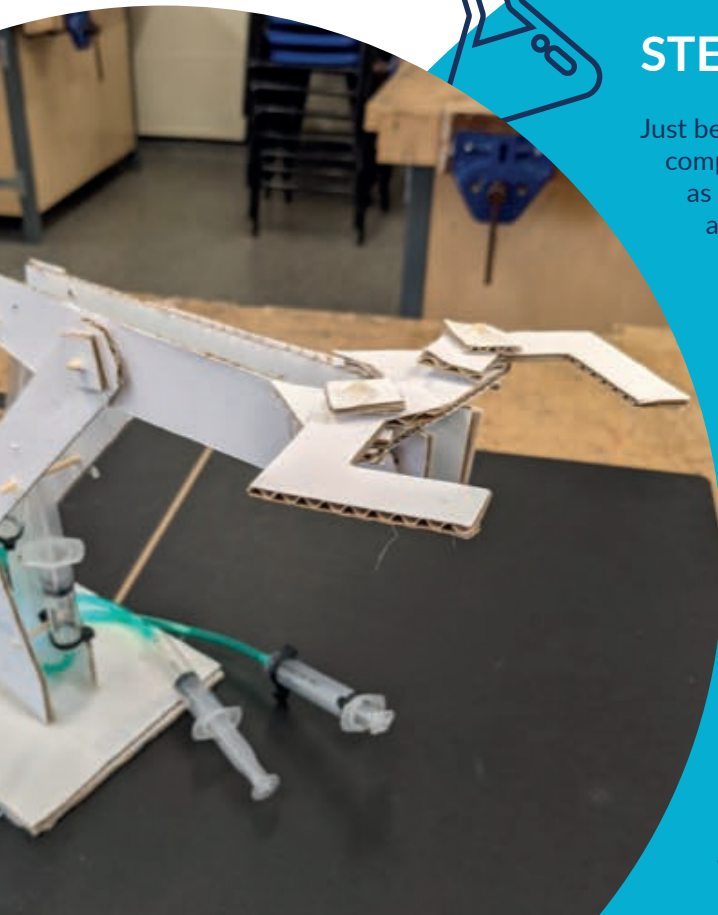


## STEM



Just before Christmas, Year 9 had the opportunity to work with the company Learn by Design as well as experts in the engineering industry as a part of their Inspiration Day. The students spent the day learning about some of the different areas within the engineering industry and then put their communication and teamwork skills to the test to plan a design for a new, luxury railway station in groups. They had to factor in costs, space and accessibility and some of the ideas they had were fantastic! They then had to present their designs to the class, with the winner from each form then presenting to the whole year group and judges. It was a nerve-wracking experience for some but was a great confidence boost and a great opportunity to talk to people in the engineering industry.

Building on from the Inspiration Day, a few Year 9 students have been working with Mr Bennett and Mr Grimmett to design and build a prototype hydraulic operated grabber. The students have been building this out of cardboard, at first, to fine tune the design before settling on a final template. Then, they plan to learn how to program a laser cutter to make the grabber out of wood, or even metal. There have been some challenges along the way but they've overcome them by tweaking the design and hopefully there will be a fully working model before the summer.





# Mathematics

It's been a very exciting year here in the mathematics department.

Our Year 7 and 8 students have embarked on a new mastery curriculum, which not only teaches and builds on the skills needed to access GCSE mathematics but also explains the principles behind some of the mathematics that students may already 'know'.

Within the mastery curriculum there are different representations that can be used to help teach topics. Students have enjoyed using double sided counters to create negative number calculations with yellow being the positive values and red being negative values, bar models have been used for students to be able to access some of the more difficult ratio questions and double number lines have been used to represent proportion.

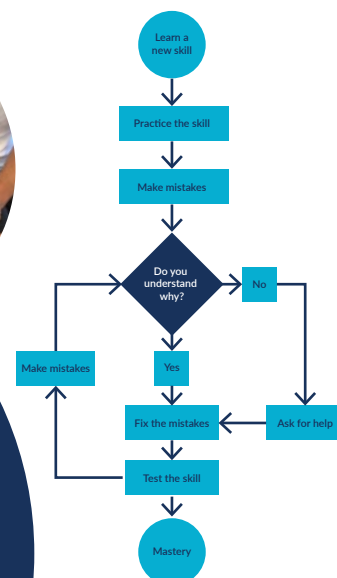
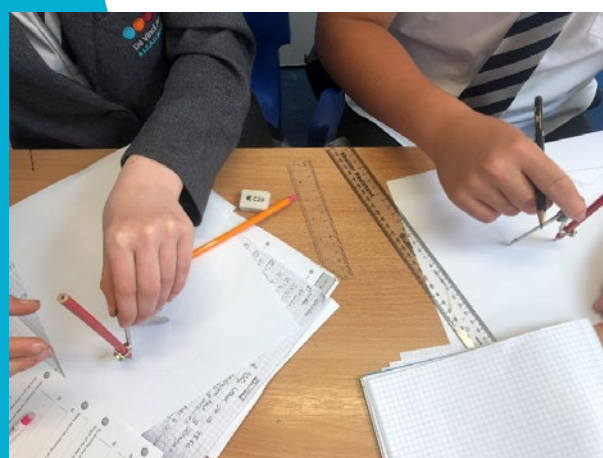
Students have also had the opportunity to use mathematical equipment and investigate shapes on geoboards and construct different shapes using a pair of compasses, ruler and protractor.

Within the department we know that not every student 'gets' maths but we create an environment where it doesn't matter if anyone makes a mistake; that is how we learn, we follow a mastery flow chart

**When we asked a year 10 student about the mathematics provision at Da Vinci Academy this is what she said:**

We believe that all students have the ability to achieve within mathematics and that we are the facilitators to their learning.

Every student in the school has been given a scientific calculator to enable them to access all areas of the mathematics curriculum both within school and at home.



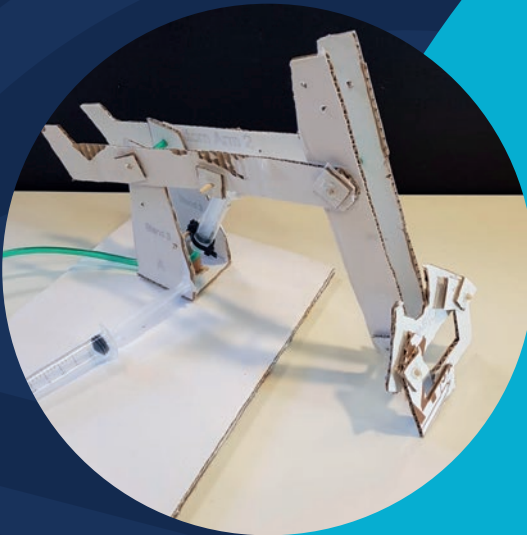
With the pandemic over the past 2 years it has been hard for students across the world and many unfortunate students have fallen behind and are running out of time to work their way back up. However, in our school community, we have been honoured to have such a great team of teachers to help and support us in any way possible. Coming back to school from a lockdown, is a huge change but somehow we have managed to stay cool, worked hard and a lot of us have been signed up for a 10 week course called My Tutor. Overall the mathematics department have dealt with the obstacles amazingly and they are expecting new Year 11s to exceed previous GCSE exam results and try their best. And that is the power of maths and support.



# Design and Technology



Year 7's have been working hard on their Graphics project and have produced 3D nets as part of their prototyping exercise.



The Year 9's have been developing robotic arms and have almost completed their first prototypes. These will then be made using the laser cutter and modified to become lighter and stronger!



Year 8's are working on improving Bee numbers by creating ambitious Bug Houses made from recycled wood.

Year 9's are currently building Wheelbarrow Planters as part of their mini construction project to develop their skills ready for September.





# Year Group Celebrations

## Year 7

In the first year of secondary school, students have been welcomed in to the academy through our transition programme and their induction days, getting to know how secondary school works and understanding what it means to be successful at Da Vinci Academy.

During term one of Year 7, students have spent time adapting to the new expectations of secondary school. In the first week of Year 7, students began learning new skills and knowledge in subjects that they have not typically studied in depth at primary school. Some of the lessons that students found most exciting were learning a new language in French, studying Food and Nutrition and building confidence cooking in our school kitchen, doing experiments in Science and taking part in a range of sports in PE such as trampolining, javelin and high jump.

Term two in Year 7 focused on students building their Character through our PSHE programme in tutor time and in At My Best lessons, which are built around character-building topics such as positive relationships, transition, FOMO, British values, gender stereotyping, inclusion and discrimination. The ability to show compassion, empathy and acceptance towards differences in society is a key attribute to being a successful student during early years at Da Vinci Academy.

Term three in Year 7 brought a focus on careers education and guidance as students start to become curious about the options that lie ahead and the choices that a successful school education can provide. We worked closely with Nottingham University for our Inspiration Days, where students discovered the possibilities of further education and the benefits of this.

Students took part in all sorts of interactive activities such as designing their own university societies to help them develop their understanding of what academic achievement can lead to in the future. At Da Vinci Academy, we believe in widening horizons for all students from an early age and educating students on the diverse career paths available to them. We do this by encouraging aspiration in all lessons and within our careers tutor programme so students are able to see the relevance to their learning in school.



# Year 8

In Year 8, students begin to develop aspirations and plans for the future, explore character, teamwork and build resilience around their studies. The journey through this year incorporates extra-curricular opportunities and enrichment activities that enhance these skills.

Through the At My Best curriculum and tutor delivered programme, growth mindset features heavily and students have been exploring what this means for them and how it can support their future. There is a strong careers focus and there are regular sessions researching careers, options for Post-16 study and understanding the world of work. Inspiration Days support this by welcoming high quality external speakers, workshops and activities to learn about the life of a university student, tomorrow's engineers and other STEM projects.

An exciting opportunity for students in Year 8 is to apply to be part of the Da Vinci Football Academy. This project is open to boys and girls who will represent the Academy in a football tournament later in the year. Team members are required to commit to training sessions throughout the year and have exemplary conduct around school.

Year 8 students are always keen to get involved in the many extra-curricular clubs at Da Vinci Academy. There have been Year 8 representatives at Running Club, Football Club, Helping the Environment, Drama Club, Coding Club and many more.

Throughout this challenging year, the students have conducted themselves exceptionally well. They are prepared and excited about taking on the challenge of Year 9 and looking ahead to the future.



## The Football Academy

The Da Vinci Football Academy is a unique all-inclusive programme for boys and girls that uses their passion and enthusiasm for sport as a catalyst to educate, inspire and mentor them. Students who gain a place in the academy receive before and after school sessions on a weekly basis which include; general football training, fitness and a weekly meeting. Additionally we have guest speakers and cross curricula links which deliver various sessions on a range of football related topics.





## Year 9

Year 9 has been an exciting year as students have made decisions which will guide and direct their future beyond the Academy. Students have completed their options for KS4 and are preparing for their transition into GCSE studies. Careers has been an important focus throughout the year within Inspiration Days and the tutor programme, students have also participated in sessions with external speakers from various industries and sectors including Rolls Royce. Students will continue to be supported and guided as they approach the next phase of their education journey and we look forward to welcoming them back into Year 10 in September.

Term One saw us returning to school after a long period of national lockdown, students settled quickly and were soon used to new rules and routines. For our Inspiration Day at the start of the academic year we welcomed iRail as part of the school's STEM initiative. Students took part in a number of STEM related activities including; a design brief, project and final presentation where they designed their own modern railway station. Students worked in teams and learnt valuable skills in communication, technology, teamwork and time management.

Term Two began with another lockdown and the introduction of a remote learning timetable. Students worked hard to ensure they had access to laptops and devices to log on and complete work from home. By the end of March, we were back in school and reminding ourselves of established routines. Our second Inspiration Day was focused on sexual health awareness and students participated in sessions led by staff and the school nurse team. Contraception, sexually transmitted infections, puberty, the law relating to sex and relationships, consent, marriage and relationships were all taught on the day in small groups and through a variety of activities.

Term Three included the final Inspiration Day with Talk the Talk, an externally run programme which aims to prepare students for the world of work. The day included workshops on CV writing, interview skills and how to apply for jobs. Careers and Post-16 education will be an increasing focus for students as they progress through KS4 and this event was a starting point for providing valuable skills which students can carry with them beyond school. Several students have applied for the Rolls Royce Young Apprentice programme in May this year and participated in a remote session led by the company. As a school we are very proud of our relationship with Rolls Royce and have supported a number of students through young apprenticeships, some of whom have gone on to be accepted in the practical apprenticeships Post-16. The 14 students who participated came prepared with insightful and thoroughly researched questions and they learnt valuable information about the company and how to apply.



# Year 10

## DVA Reading

During Year 10, students have read three novels this year. In the DVA Reading session, students follow-along with their form tutor as they are read novels, which are critically acclaimed as being exceptional in their genre.

### Life of Pi, Jann Martell

"I really liked the descriptive writing at the start of this book when it spoke of Pi's colourful life in India living in a zoo. Disaster strikes as his family drown whilst emigrating to Canada. Pi survives but suffers the ordeal of sharing a life raft with Richard Parker, a savage Bengal Tiger and other specimens which are slowly consumed by Richard. What will Pi do to prevent himself from being next?"

Brad, 10P

### The Great Gatsby, F Scott Fitzgerald

"We read The Great Gatsby, a book set in the 1920s in the USA. Gatsby is a very wealthy gentleman who has separated from the love of his life, Daisy. The plot of the book is all about Gatsby trying to win Daisy's affections again. Throughout the book, we meet an assortment of interesting characters who add complexity to the plot. In the end, Gatsby meets his tragic death, nobody comes to his funeral showing that his life was empty."

Josephine, 10S

### I Capture the Castle, Dodie Smith

"It is set in a castle in rural England. The book is in diary format from the main character, Cassandra's, point of view. She lives in the castle with her father (a once successful author), her step-mother, her sister, brother and the farm hand. The book discusses important themes of love, loyalty, and mental health."

Mia, 10I



Term one saw the first Inspiration Day which was led face to face by external providers, Talk the Talk. This session focused on supporting the Year 10 pupils on their journey to becoming confident communicators for life. The day was fast-paced, enjoyable and 'eye opening' in terms of how pupils moved out of their comfort zone and verbally expressed their opinions.

As term one came to an end all Year 10 pupils were looking forward to the Christmas break. But before we wished each other Merry Christmas and went home to our families the year group worked hard to fill boxes with food and toiletries for the homeless shelter in Derby. The Christmas tree that took centre stage in the atrium was surrounded with lots of generosity and kindness from all year groups. The year group also wrote a Christmas post card to staff members to say a personal thank you. This act of kindness put a smile on so many people's faces and was a lovely gift to start the Christmas break. To extend the Christmas kindness Year 10 also wrote Christmas postcards to the elderly in two local care homes, sharing kind and warm felt Christmas messages.

At the end of March, Year 10 experienced a careers week, where they started creating their CV ready for when they start applying for colleges and apprenticeships in Year 11. We were also very lucky to have four football coaches from Derby County speak to our pupils about career pathways and opportunities. Finally, two guest speakers from Nottingham Trent University led a virtual session about resilience and self-esteem.

Term Three included the final Inspiration Day, The Art of Brilliance, an interactive and thought-provoking program that challenged pupils current attitude and mind set, transforming their mind into a 'can do' attitude to anything is possible, front loaded with positive psychology.





# Year 11

We are extremely proud of our Year 11 cohort for what they have achieved in such challenging and uncertain times. As a year group they have demonstrated a huge amount of resilience and shown a great drive to succeed. At the start of the academic year, we challenged them to raise their standards of conduct, engagement, and uniform. Without question, each student displayed great maturity and evidently took responsibility for themselves and their learning. As a result of their attitudes and efforts, they have now amazingly all secured post 16 provisions.

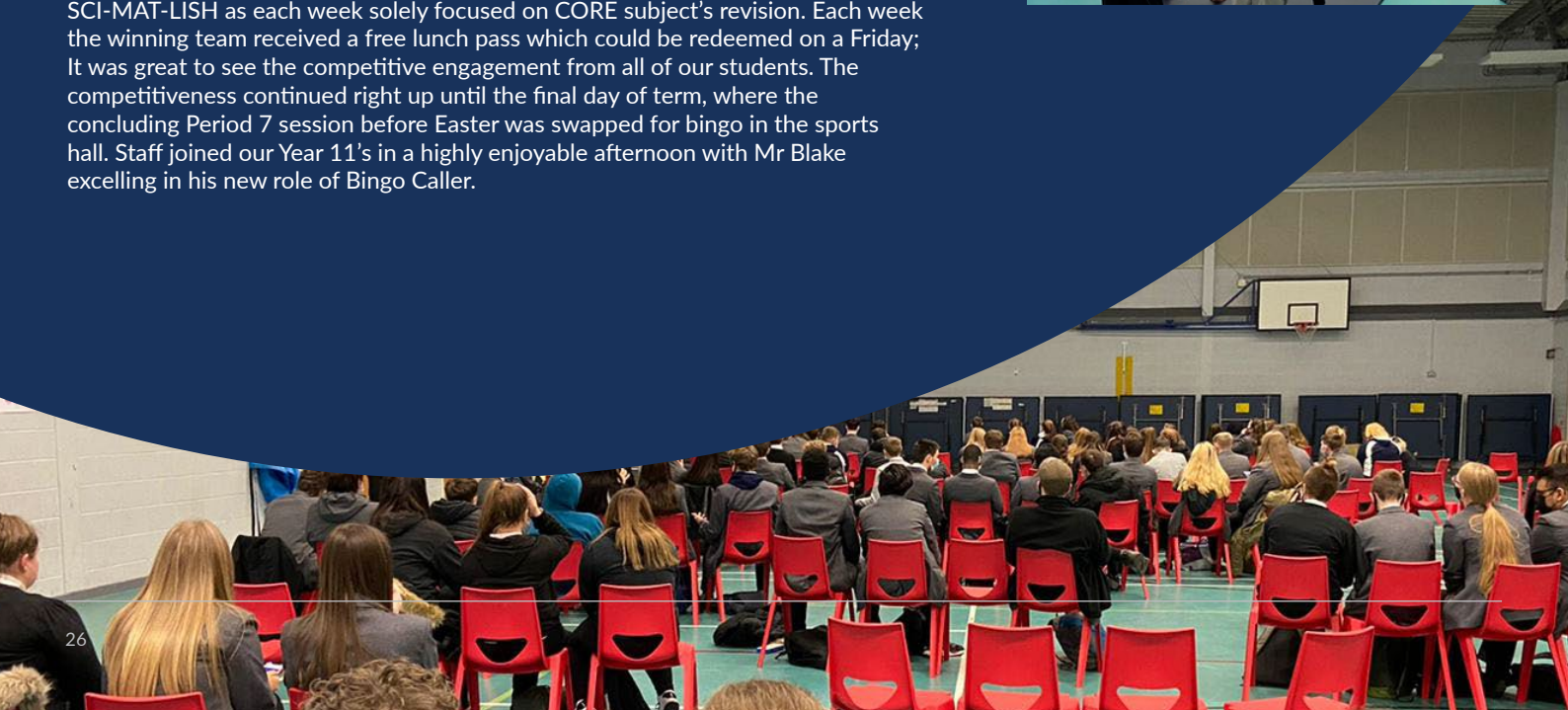
Playing a huge role within our success were our fantastically motivated prefect team who have led by example since appointed in September 2020. This group of students, who were carefully selected through an interview process, have worked as lead ambassadors to Key Stage 3 students in various roles. More recently, the whole team planned, organised and delivered a hugely successful staff versus students football match in order to raise additional funds for their prom.

At the beginning of the academic year, our Year 11's resumed their studies with amazing attitudes and exemplary punctuality. The whole year group welcomed a 7-period timetable into their school day to drive their achievement and success. To further support their progress, we delivered Inspiration Day 1 with a focus on "Exam Preparation". The Year 11 cohort rotated between the following 4 activities throughout the day: Brain Food, Importance of Fitness, Revision Tips and different relaxation methods including Yoga and Meditation. Each activity demonstrated its own importance during exam preparation and the impact it can have. As a reward for their tireless efforts, the year group were rewarded in the final week of term with an external agency providing each student with a departing afternoon treat.

Term two provided our cohort with a new-look approach to their academic studies. Due to unforeseen circumstances (a global pandemic!) our students were introduced to an online platform in order to continue their progress. Within this time all students attended a full timetable of online lessons and featured in the school's first ever virtual parents evening, which was a huge success.

As an Academy, we launched our "Success Fayre" micro site to help support exam preparation. It included generic revision tips, overall student wellbeing, stress management resources and three top tips to succeed from each curriculum area.

We welcomed our return to the Da Vinci Academy building with a "SCI-MAT-LISH" (whole year group interactive quiz) Period 7 session which was a fun and engaging alternative to classroom learning and long-awaited social interaction. We called it SCI-MAT-LISH as each week solely focused on CORE subject's revision. Each week the winning team received a free lunch pass which could be redeemed on a Friday; It was great to see the competitive engagement from all of our students. The competitiveness continued right up until the final day of term, where the concluding Period 7 session before Easter was swapped for bingo in the sports hall. Staff joined our Year 11's in a highly enjoyable afternoon with Mr Blake excelling in his new role of Bingo Caller.





Our final term proved extremely memorable for all. Our prefect team worked hard alongside staff to plan, organise, and deliver Da Vinci Academies first ever Staff v Year 11 students football match, with all the financial proceeds going towards their prom. Over 300 paying spectators witnessed the Year 11's become triumphant in an unconventional 4-2 win, thanks to Mr Needham's gifts and a Ryan hat-trick.

Continuing the sporting theme, the year group also exchanged an academic afternoon in the classroom for an incredibly competitive "Mini Sports Day". Due to the cancellation of last year's sports day, long awaited bragging rights were on the line to see who would leave Da Vinci Academy, 'the best in their event'.

These unforgettable moments were a reflection on the whole year group's attitudes and efforts. Without their willingness to succeed and their ability to meet deadlines these events would not take place.



## Success

The success centre provision at Da Vinci Academy is designed, to allow all young people to be successful! Whether it is full time support and guidance, or just a daily check in with your mentor, success creates a bespoke plan to support all our students needs. We believe that every student deserves the opportunity to a good education and guidance irrespective of the challenges they may have faced or the support they may need. The programme is designed with a holistic education plan in mind, together with the support of our success leaders, every child at Da Vinci Academy can be a SUCCESS!

In the Autumn term our Success students enjoyed a 6 week climbing course in the Peak District. Our students started with three weeks in an indoor climbing centre where they learned how to climb safely and effectively before moving onto outdoor climbing in the Sheffield Peak District. We also democratically selected our Success Prefects. The delighted students help steer their fellow students in the right direction and act as positive role models to everyone.

Success students were also lucky enough to visit a Street Art centre in Derby, where our students produced their own graffiti style art work.







During the Spring term the Success students experienced a Bushcraft Survival Course. Students learned how to build a shelter, build their own fire, setting traps and snares, foraging, gutting fish and prepared lots of different meals "Al fresco style." Pictured are two of our students who passed their Level 2 Bushcraft Survival & Wilderness Living Skills.



Our students have also begun a Water Sports Course where they are learning how to Paddleboard, Kayak and Canoe. Success students also relish the opportunity to put their cooking skills to the test and try out their latest creations on the school staff!





# Learning Centre

We were excited to be back at the start of a new year at Da Vinci Academy, little did we know this was going to be another turbulent year.

One of the positives to come out of the previous school closures is that we have moved from one Learning Centre to three Learning Centres; to protect all students within their bubbles and continue to support children. Our focus during the autumn term was supporting all students in their transition into their new year groups. Nationally many people needed support with their social and emotional wellbeing. At Da Vinci we offered a safe space at break and lunchtimes where students could come and speak to staff and their friends. We created a 'Positivitree' where students and staff identified and displayed positives, no matter how small. We posed a big question such as 'What makes you happy today?' Within year group bubbles we started groups – Lego therapy, Bead Therapy and Reading club. These focused on wellbeing and communication.

During the summer term, it has been so nice to have the school back to some sort of normality. The students have shown a real pride in our school and their learning. It is so lovely to hear from Mr Thompson how so many children with SEND are attending extra-curricular clubs. Miss Bellfield has really enjoyed spending time with everyone that has attended gardening club. The Rhubarb haul was impressive. We are delighted that we are now able to welcome parents and carers back into school, for EHCP reviews and to celebrate success.

We would like to take this opportunity to say well done to the Year 11s. They have worked closely with the Learning Support team and their teachers to complete evidence for their Teacher Assessed Grades and prepare for Post-16 placements. We wish them every success in the future and can't wait to hear how well they are doing.

Throughout the pandemic with bubble closures and national school closures we have continued to strive for every student with SEND to feel supported and included to reach their potential and inspire others. We do not define our ethos for students with Special Educational Needs and disabilities as something separate. We are an inclusive and diverse academy, we are proud our vision and values apply equally to all.

We are so excited for September 2021 and everything that it brings!



Lego Therapy



Positivitree



Bead Therapy



Gardening Club

Spring saw Caelan, Year 8, wanting to support others with Autism – he completed a sponsored walk to raise money for sensory equipment. Caelan was joined on his walk, socially distanced, by his friend in Year 9 and their mothers. They played the Beat the Street game and walked 6.7 miles. Caelan was surprised by how far he had walked raising a staggering £120. Well done Caelan we are very proud of you.

## CAELANS SPONSORED WALK (SON)

Distance	Elev Gain	Time
6.67 mi	336 ft	2h 26m



**Congratulations, this activity is your longest walk on Strava!**





# Great Characters

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is offered to young people starting at Bronze Level. Few schools offer this opportunity as part of their curriculum but here at Da Vinci Academy we recognise the opportunities that can arise for students who have completed the award. DofE is widely renowned for developing young people's confidence, communication, independence, health and happiness in addition to referencing on their CV and further education applications.

This year, thanks to a successful funding bid we have begun the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award with all Year 9 students during curriculum time. So far the groups have worked towards their Volunteering Section through classroom based work ready to complete their 3 months voluntary work next academic year. Students have completed the Physical Section through learning about and participating in the game of Handball.

Even Lockdown couldn't put a stop to the year 9s progress as they started work on their Skill Section at home, with students choosing to do varied activities from learning a new language to playing the keyboard. The students who were in school during that time participated in model clay making and learning to play chess.

We have also been lucky enough this Summer term to have had a session led by Jon Watts, a chef who's life was turned around by participating in the DofE. He told the Year 9's his story from his time spent in a Young Offenders institution to his success as a chef after working hard once DofE opened doors for him and gave him a passion for cooking.

Next year, as the students enter Year 10 we will be seeking volunteering opportunities and preparing for the Expedition part of the award working with The Mill Adventure Base.



# Careers

Careers continues to be a central pillar to the unique provision that we offer at Da Vinci Academy. Our students receive their careers education through a variety of different ways including but not limited to our own bespoke careers lessons delivered during our Tutor sessions; inspiration days as well as specialist support when students are in Years 10 and 11.

We have hosted a huge number of excellent careers events through the year. Year 7 and 8 had a University taster session delivered by the University of Derby. This interactive experience allowed students to ask questions about university life from university staff members and students.

As well as participating in mock interviews year ten heard about careers experiences from Derby County Football; received a talk from the University of Nottingham and completed a CV workshop.

Our Year 11 students have been busy through the year applying to attend their colleges, sixth forms and apprenticeships of their choice. In addition to this we have also had several students participate in the Discover US Programme delivered by The University of Sheffield. One of our Year 11 students wrote about his experiences with the programme:

Amanda, who also participated in the Discover US programme, has won several prizes and awards from the programme. The University said:

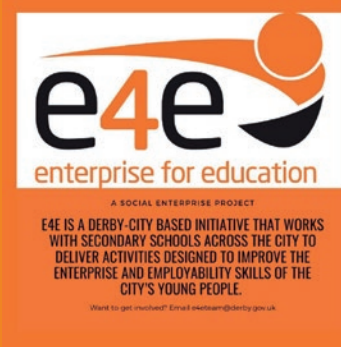
*"We are delighted to tell you that Amanda achieved a Star Student Award for excellent participation at the 'Next-level Note Taking' workshop. A certificate and prize has been posted directly home. Amanda has received multiple awards throughout Discover US so a huge well done to this pupil!"*

Amanda reflected on her experience of the programme and said:



Being in the Sheffield Discover US programme, has really opened my eyes and given me an insight into the many things you could do at University. It was such an amazing experience as I made a ton of new friends as well as gaining information about Uni life, on top of that getting a chance to win a whole lot of prizes. My favourite experience during this programme would probably be a biology taster session where we got to extract our DNA, put it into a necklace and keep it! I would really recommend being a part of this programme because it gives you such a variety of subjects you can test out such as: engineering, biology, politics, music, dentistry and so much more.

**Amanda**  
Year 11



Year 9 engaged in an exciting E4E finance project on money management and Year 10 received excellent communication training from the provider Talk The Talk. Year 10 then used their training on communication to help them with their mock interviews during their exciting and inspiring careers week in April.



**The University**  
**Of Sheffield.**

Having the opportunity to take part in the Discover US Programme has been a pleasure. Attending several practical sessions has given me an insight on the university courses available and to learn about what it is like becoming a university student. You have the chance to make new friends and to visit many key buildings around Sheffield. It was amazing to take part in such a programme and I would definitely recommend it."

**Sami**  
Year 11



Our provision would not be possible without the tireless support and efforts of our external providers including Luminate, DEBP and DANCOP. Through the funding from DANCOP we have been able to offer various programmes. All Year 11 students have had a 1:1 interview with a qualified level 6 careers advisor from Luminate to help them with their post 16 choices. A small group of year 11 students have had sessions throughout the year with a Qualified Employability worker from DEBP, working on a Raising Aspirations programme. Some Year 11 students took part in the E4E Jobsmart plus programme which included a series of mentoring sessions with professionals from the local community.



# unifrog

## At My Best

### Year 7 -

Additional time is given within the Year 7 curriculum to ensure all students at Da Vinci have a firm foundation as they progress through the academy, these lessons are taught by the academy DSL – Keir Mather, through 'AT MY BEST' lessons. The lessons are built around education and character building topics such as: positive relationships, transition, FOMO, British values, gender stereotyping, inclusion and discrimination.

### Year 8 -

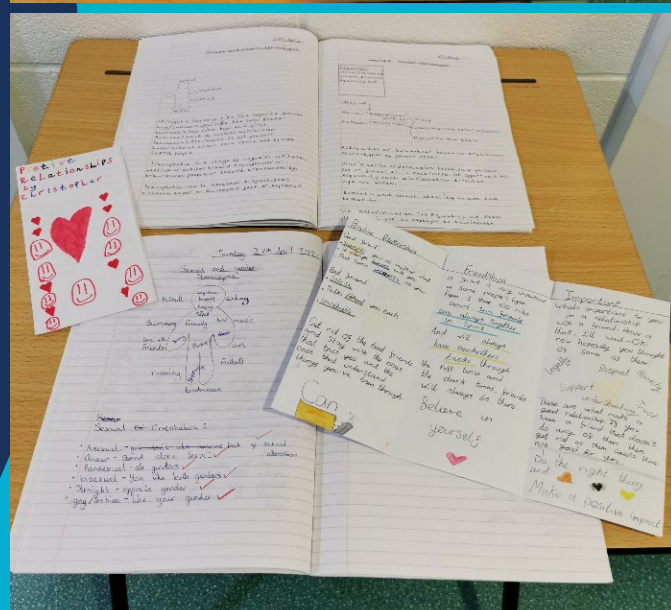
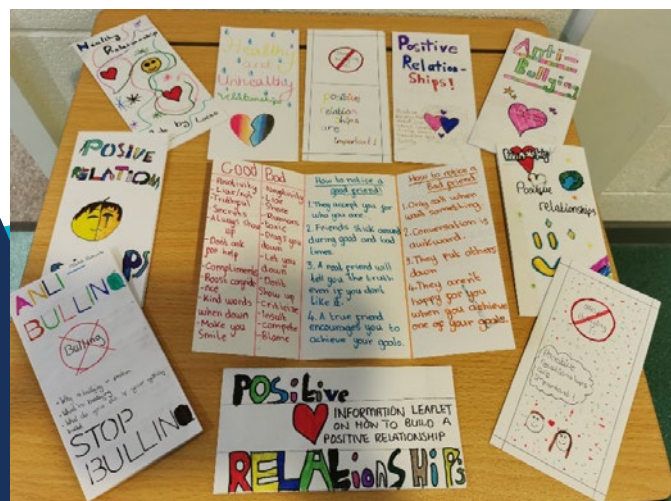
In Year 8 all students complete 'AT MY BEST' led by the PE department. This builds on the Year 7 programme with particular emphasis on giving students time to develop key skills such as teamwork, resilience, independence and confidence.

### Is it okay to be different at Da Vinci?

All Year 7 students recently worked on an essay in At My Best lessons with the question "Is it okay to be different at Da Vinci", here are just a few of the things they said:

This term we have received funding from DANCOP and will be running sessions delivered by Beaumont Coaching with some Year 9 and 10 students to improve resilience as well as a Cherished course for a group of KS4 10 girls and a Football mentoring programme for KS4 boys working on improving self-esteem.

DANCOP has also funded Unifrog, which is a careers platform that brings into one place every apprenticeship, university course and college course in the UK, as well as career opportunities, such as MOOCs and School Leaver Programmes. The platform makes it easy for students to write their CVs and Personal Statements, record their key skills and research careers they may be interested in. Unifrog is used to support careers sessions during tutor time and students have access to the platform at any time of the day or week.



Da Vinci Academy educates all students about inclusion and a culture of kindness so we can all have fun while we're at school.



The school truly care about their students and even have their very own culture of kindness rule.



It doesn't matter how different you are, but it does matter how others treat you.

# Extended Curriculum

At Da Vinci Academy we have worked hard to embed an Extended Curriculum programme that excites and engages all of our students. As an academy we proudly offer a bespoke, broad and balanced Extended Curriculum timetable that rotates students' opportunities each half-term. Our most recent "Summer Half-Term 1" timetable offers a huge 52 activities for our students to engage in; including before, during (lunch) and after school. Across these 52 activities, there are opportunities for our students to engage in sports and lessons they may never have had the chance to before. Each department willingly contribute towards our programme and provide exciting activities such as; Boom Town, Helping the Community, Archery and Girls' Softball.

As an Academy we recognise the importance of learning outside the classroom and our aim is to get each student to engage in at least 1 activity a week. During our last half-term we had over 300 students who successfully achieved this! Each student who engages in one of our activities are also working towards their "Gold Club" status. On attendance, each student will be promoted through the Bronze, Silver and Gold Membership Scheme. Once promoted to "Gold Club" membership, students will then receive a badge to wear on their school blazer.

As well as our Extended Curriculum timetable within school, we also use our community links to help our students broaden their horizons across the region. During this academic year, four of our students were enrolled on to a Nottingham-based, Professional Football Coaching programme called "Elite Football Development" and a group of Year 9 students are now working weekly with Derby Youth Theatre. This "Drama Group" more recently announced that they have been working hard within school and within their own time to plan, create and develop their own show in order to showcase what they have learnt.

We are currently preparing our next Extended Curriculum timetable ready for the start of September. As an Academy we look forward to introducing new exciting opportunities to all which will also include the return of competitive school fixtures across the city! Our most recent Extended Curriculum timetable can always be found on our website.

**Mr Thompson**





# Recognition at Da Vinci Academy



## Centaur And Slater Trophies

### Centaur Trophy

Hannah was successfully selected to take part in a competitive online languages masterclass programme run by the University of Cambridge, with several sessions throughout the year. The programme is described by Trinity College as focussing on “the benefits of being multilingual in the working world, practicing using French inside and outside of the classroom setting and having a go at learning some other languages on offer at Cambridge University”, whilst giving a taste of life at an elite UK university. Hannah did really well to manage her time, balancing her extra-curricular languages studies with her other commitments.



### Slater Trophy

As Prefect, Lokesh accepted the Slater Trophy on behalf of Abbey House who won the overall amount of Achievement Points in 2019/2020 – Congratulations Abbey House!



# Focus On Our Great Students!



## Scarlette, Year 7

Has made a fantastic start to secondary school and has pushed through some really challenging times with positivity and determination to succeed in her learning and achievement, in all lessons. Scarlette is always helpful with both peers and adults at school, she goes out of her way to make others smile and is so supportive of others. An absolute pleasure to have in Year 7 and at DVA!



## Ryan, Year 8

Showed outstanding commitment to his studies during lockdown. Many staff commented on the quality of his remote learning. He is a hard-working and polite young man who is a shining example of the academy's principles.



## Jodie, Year 9

For always setting an example of exemplarily behaviour in lessons and around school. Jodie's attitude towards learning is exceptional, she shows interest and enthusiasm in all lessons and is on track to meet her aspirational targets at GCSE.



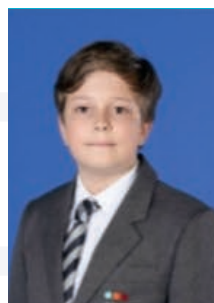
## Richard, Year 10

Is the perfect example of a role model for year 10. His attendance is 100% which has allowed him to achieve 168 achievement points. His dedication and motivation to receive the best possible grades at the end of year 11 has meant that he is currently on track to achieve his minimum expected grade if not exceeding this grade in all of his subjects. Richard is a very polite and conscientious student who displays acts of kindness on a daily basis to both his peers and teachers. His positive mindset allows him to have a go at any challenge while working independently or as part of a team.



## Lokesh, Year 11

Has shown outstanding commitment to his studies. The sustained progress that he has made across his academic studies is a testament to his exemplarily attitude to learning across our academy. Outside of the classroom he has become a well-respected leader within our academy. Having only joined us in Year 9 he soon became an irreplaceable part of our school community leading the way as one of our exceptional senior student role models. His dedication to helping and inspiring his fellow students is truly inspirational.



## Nikodem, Year 7

What a joy it is to have Nikodem at DVA! Nikodem always brings a smile to peoples' faces with his bubbly personality and his unapologetic individuality. He works extremely hard in all lessons and shows a real enthusiasm for learning from others, as well as sharing his knowledge with others. Nikodem has taken the move to secondary school in his stride and continues to impress us every single day.



## Lily-Mae, Year 8

Always works hard and is committed to her studies. This did not change during lockdown where she continued to attend school and was very helpful to staff and other students. She is an outstanding member of year 8 and deserves this recognition.



## Ethan, Year 9

Has gone above and beyond this year creating an impressive CV to accompany his application for the Rolls Royce Young Apprentice scheme. Ethan always demonstrates an exceptionally positive attitude making him a role model for his peers.



## Mia, Year 10

Has become a confident and knowledgeable netball player, demonstrating great leadership and support for her team mates. Mia is an extremely hard working and determined student, who has the ambition and drive to succeed.



## Amanda, Year 11

Is a student who always goes above and beyond academically. She has also developed her wider character whilst at Da Vinci Academy and has contributed to school life in an exceptionally positive way. Amanda has continued to demonstrate this not only in our own community but out on the Sheffield university Discover US programme. We are delighted to announce that Amanda has received a Star student award for excellent participation in this programme as well as numerous other awards.



# Awards for our Academy

## National Online Safety School (NOS)

Da Vinci Academy became a certified National Online Safety (NOS) school for the first time during the academic year 2020-2021. This further highlights our commitment to supporting students to stay safe online, something which has become even more important due to the challenges of the pandemic over the last 18 months. As a NOS school we have access to resources and training that helps the whole community including students, staff and parents. We look forward to building on our provision and support over the next academic year.



## Emotionally Healthy School

We are proud to now be a recognised emotionally healthy school at Silver level.

The report produced by the Carnegie Centre of Excellence is one that we are delighted with and highlights our commitment to supporting students and staff with their wellbeing.

### Key points from the report are:

It is clear that the Da Vinci Academy has a strong supportive ethos and it ensures that all students are well equipped to deal with both the challenges of today and are also prepared for future challenges. The school is constantly reviewing their practice, observing what others are doing and sharing their practice with the aim of ensuring that they can provide the best possible resources and support for their whole community.

The school leadership has a very clear vision for the school 'One Team, Changing Worlds', that is driven both by professional understanding of the issues and by personal experience. They have been backed by the governors who have made a significant investment to enable the school to provide support at all levels. They have a good number of pastoral non-teaching staff (each year group has 2 leads, one of whom is non-teaching, and the mental health lead is also a non-teaching senior leader). This has led to measurable improvement in many aspects of school life such as behaviour and a reduction in exclusions.

The Headteacher wants to ensure that Da Vinci Academy is the school of choice for staff and therefore has pulled together a Workload and Wellbeing charter that is fully embedded in school culture. Staff are supported through the Trust's Employee Assistance Program but also through a wide variety of smaller actions such as Buzz Breakfast, Honorary Parking Space, and Secret Santa etc. There is an open door policy so staff can discuss issues without fear of stigma. Feedback from the staff survey was very positive and the lead ensures that there are regular reminders of where staff can go to find support as well as providing regular opportunities for staff to attend training.

The school lead is particularly proud of the work that the academy has done to support pupils. It now works proactively to support pupils before they get to crisis. There are a variety of ways that pupils can seek support and clear referral systems that are embedded in the school of which everyone is aware.

Pupils receive a variety of PSHE programmes on mental health and dedicated time to focus on these, as well as extensive pastoral support. The lead governor is also PE lead in the school and has been working hard on the links between physical and mental health.

The academy has worked hard to build good relationships with families and offer a variety of opportunities for parents to seek support through coffee mornings, 'Welcome to...' evenings, newsletters and website signposting. During the Covid Lockdown the school counsellor has worked with parents as well as the children. The number of non-teaching pastoral staff meant that parents are always able to speak to someone when they need to and issues are dealt with quickly.

The school is working hard to help bridge the gap during waiting times between referral and external support, so parents feel listened to and acknowledged.

# Facing into the COVID-19 Challenge



Throughout all lockdowns Da Vinci Academy remained open to all of our young people who needed us as well as the students of our 'hero' Critical Workers.

During lockdown 1, students were supported in school participating in various activities, including gardening, cookery, arts and crafts and a TT Rockstars league. The strawberries that were grown during lockdown 1 were enjoyed by all.

Free school meals were provided all the way through to the provision of the Government funded voucher scheme.

Student resource work packs were produced and delivered bi-monthly to households for circa 300 students to enable access to home learning.

Da Vinci staff and students contributed to the national effort by making protective visors for local critical workers.

Although lockdown 1 meant the Class of 2020 were unable to have the traditional Leavers Assembly and Prom, each student received a DVA mug and golden star balloon personally delivered by members of SLT and the Year 11 team to wish them well with their future endeavours. A socially distanced results day took place in August.



September 2020 welcomed all students, including our new Year 7's, back to what was a different looking school. Individual pencil cases for equipment, designated areas of school for year groups along with hand sanitising units in all rooms and social distancing signage were a few of the protective measures invested in by the academy.

One of our amazing parents coordinated the supply and production of over 100 material facemasks for the benefit and comfort of our students. Generous staff and families made contributions towards the cost of materials.

As we moved into the colder part of the academic year we subsidised the purchase of 241 DVA Hoodies to enable students to keep warm whilst complying with Government guidance on ventilation!

Christmas certainly wasn't cancelled at Da Vinci with the Tree and Reindeers making an early appearance in school not to mention a staff production of a Christmas Video for all students.

As we moved into lockdown 2, all lessons moved online with a full timetable of live lessons. 15% of students driven by need were also supported in school.

For those students unable to access online learning, 248 laptops/devices were supplied which equates to 38% of our student population.

Kind local businesses including Morrison's donated Easter eggs and books for treats and rewards to staff and students alike.



*We would like to say...*

# Thank You!

To all our amazing students, families, key workers and staff for keeping strong together as one team

# Positive Feedback



Thank you to every one of the teachers for the effort put into keeping our child engaged in her learning, education and most importantly her future.

Parent



We would like to commend our child's school - Da Vinci Academy in Derby. Our son has an EHCP and complex needs, and since the first lockdown, nearly a year ago, the care and attention to not only his academic needs, but his emotional and mental health has been outstanding. He has attended lessons wherever possible and has received excellent tuition.

Parent



Thanking yourself, Ms Quinn, Mrs Roberts and all your team at Da Vinci for all the time and support you are giving the students during these strange times.

Parent



I would also like to thank Keir and Karen once again for all the support they give the school health team and I feel Da Vinci works very well with us and we support each other in a really positive way.

Visitor



I wanted to say how happy I am in school. I really enjoyed last half term, the lessons and the teachers. I am enjoying school the most I ever have.

Student



Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the school in what is still very challenging times.

Parent



Thank you so much for all of the opportunities that you have given me, I really appreciate everything. Thank you for having the confidence in me to be the Head Girl, I am really grateful for the opportunity. I gained so much confidence from this experience (and all of the others).

Student



I want to thank Da Vinci Academy for the overwhelming support I have received during my NQT year.

Staff Member



Can I just say how amazing you have all been with dealing with the current pandemic and the approach taken. We appreciate and acknowledge the frustration and at the same time the dedication you have put into ensuring our children are kept safe.

Parent



You're doing some great work at Da Vinci!

Visitor



It was great to be back in a school again and talk to your wonderful pupils.

Visitor



I wanted to say a huge thank you to you and all the staff that have taught and cared for my son this year, I cannot put into words how much all your support has helped him (and me), especially when school closed and he was learning from home. Every email for help, encouragement and praise the teachers sent made a massive impact in motivating him with his work and making him proud of what he achieved.

Parent



I just wanted to tell you I'm so glad we picked your school and we are excited to see where our daughter's future takes her with the support she is receiving from members of staff.

Parent





Da Vinci Academy  
A L.E.A.D. Academy

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"One Team, Changing Worlds"