



Padworth College - Autumn 2020 Newsletter

An Update from the Principal

Despite the many challenges that Covid-19 has presented this term, I have been delighted with the positivity and resilience that has been displayed by our students. They have demonstrated amazing adaptability and resilience, supporting each other warmly and genuinely, communicating effectively and remaining focused on their studies.

There has been a lot of reflection amongst the College community and we have all gained a very clear understanding of the vision of the College's founders. In a community like Padworth, there are a range of traits that make it work well: tolerance, kindness, empathy, and understanding. All of these qualities have been seen in abundance this term.

Outside the classroom, although there have been no trips this term, the students have had an enormous amount of fun baking, participating in scavenger hunts, enjoying countryside walks and house competitions in sport, and Christmas decoration making. Further details can be found in this newsletter.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very peaceful and safe Christmas.

Lorraine Atkins
Principal



Weekend Activities

In light of the ongoing restrictions due to Covid-19, we have had to adapt our weekend programme this term. Nonetheless, we have had a full range of weekend activities, making the most of the College grounds and local area.

We started the term with a whole school rounders match and the students thoroughly enjoyed the Scavenger Hunt competition which allowed them to complete tasks and activities across the College campus. We also took students on walks along the Kennet & Avon Canal in the nearby village of Aldermaston and to Ufton Court, an Elizabethan manor house in nearby Ufton Nervet, making the most of the Autumn sunshine.



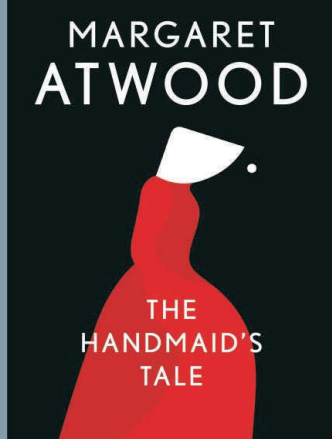
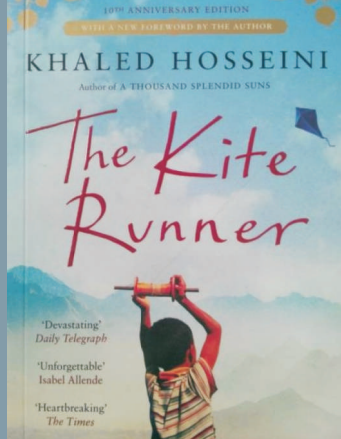
Crafts and baking on Sunday afternoons have been popular throughout this term and the students have had the opportunity to make hair scrunches, paint pebble mandalas and design and make decorations for Halloween and Christmas. They have also made (and more importantly eaten) mug cakes, rocky roads and chocolate tiffin cakes!

World Mental Health Day 2020 on 10 October was a great opportunity for our students to get together and talk about the importance of mental health and support from friends, whilst also decorating cakes.

We are finishing the term with some all-important house competitions. House Basketball was a great success, with Mortimer House emerging as the winners and Tadley House being awarded the prize for 'Respect and Fair Play'. Currently, students are preparing for the Christmas House Music competition on the final day of term, which promises to be a festive way to round off an eventful few months!

Subject Spotlight - English Literature

In Year 13, students have been immersed in the culture of Afghanistan by reading *The Kite Runner*. We have been learning about Afghanistan's troubled history and seeing, through the perspective of a young Pashtun boy, the racial tensions in the country. This novel asks the question - "can we be good again when we have made some terrible mistakes" - and the answer is in the affirmative! We have learnt about the national sport of kite flying, witnessed some truly epic fight scenes and explored the difficulties of growing up amongst war and violence.



In Year 12, we have headed into the future, into a dystopic world of surveillance and control. The students have been reading the novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*. The novel paints a dark picture of fear, mistrust and isolation but the girls who have been studying it, seem to have really enjoyed it! It has made us all very grateful for the freedoms that we have as women to do ordinary things that we would normally take for granted like being able to read and write.

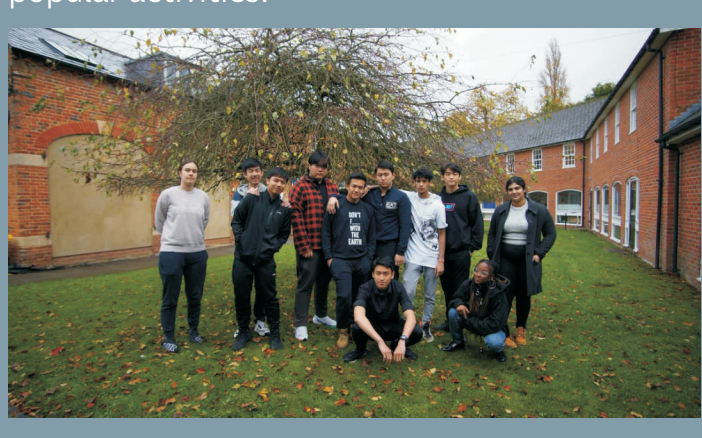
One of the short stories that Year 11 have looked at is called *The Necklace*. It takes the fairy tale Cinderella and turns it on its head. The students have been learning the concept of irony and been asked to think about what it is important to live for. They have also explored poetry from different time zones such as World War 1 or the siege of Sarajevo, and spreading as far afield geographically as India in the East and America in the West. In this way, the students are not only learning about literature but history and geography too!

Subject Spotlight - PSHE

During this term, the Year 13 students have each had to present on a given PSHE topic. We have had some excellently researched and maturely conducted presentations on topics such as Diversity and Equality, LGBTQ+, and Safe Sex. The Year 13 Tutors are looking forward to further delivery on topics including Time Management, Plagiarism, and Budgeting at University!

Half Term Programme

During Half Term, many of the students opted to remain on campus to participate in the College's Half Term Programme. They enjoyed a range of academic and extra-curricular activities, including a Business Game, Rocket Making in Science, Photography Workshop, Orienteering, an abridged production of a Mid Summer's Night Dream and a Halloween Murder Mystery Game. We were keen to ensure that the students had the opportunity to experience some new challenges and to this end, the Climbing Wall, erected outside Padworth House proved to be one of the most popular activities!



Update on Clubs

The Make a Difference on Mondays Club amongst other activities, has continued to raise awareness of the charity Young Minds by posting on the Well-being Team and notices in assemblies.

The Astronomy Club continues to be popular, with some great opportunities for star gazing during the Autumn months.

Debate Club is a student-run club which meets every Thursday to discuss topics ranging from politics to philosophy. This term, students have debated the stigma of mental health, differing global education systems and how different cultures discipline their students. Next term will see a return of the Model United Nations where students represent, research and share what happens in their own country.

IELTS Success and University Offers

In preparation for university, a number of our Year 13 cohort have been preparing for the IELTS examination. Many congratulations to Crishelle, Teo and Younis, who have achieved excellent IELTS results of 8.5, 7.5 and 7.5 respectively. Meanwhile, the Year 13 class have submitted their UCAS applications, with some initial offers already received, including conditional offers to study Biometrics at Cardiff University (x2), Economics and Finance at the University of Bristol and Accounting and Finance at the University of Manchester.

Christmas at Padworth

As we approach the end of term, it is beginning to look a bit like Christmas! The Christmas tree has been decorated and we are looking forward to Christmas lunch and carols and other festivities.

Whilst many of our international students will be returning home for the holidays, in light of the ongoing travel restrictions associated with the global pandemic, we are delighted to be partnering with Bright World Guardianships and Kings Education to offer a Christmas Programme. The 'Relax & Revise @ Christmas' programme will be run from Saturday 12 December until Sunday 3 January. For further details, please visit:

<https://www.brightworldguardianships.com/en/holiday-courses/relax-and-revise-christmas-padworth-college/>

