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# Welcome to The Gower, Volume LVII, Issue I

This annual publication for University College School is shared with present members of the school community and Old Gowers throughout the world.

We hope that you enjoy this redesigned and restructured magazine. It is our intention for it to give readers a feel for life across the UCS Foundation. As a school, we are ever more conscious of our outward-facing responsibilities – to the local and wider communities in which we live and move and, increasingly, for the planet itself. In light of our concerted efforts to improve our own sustainability, *The Gower* is now only printed for Old Gowers who requested a hard copy. If you would like to receive a hard copy next year but did not this year, please contact [oldgowers@ucs.org.uk](mailto:oldgowers@ucs.org.uk). Any feedback on this edition can be emailed to [thegower@ucs.org.uk](mailto:thegower@ucs.org.uk).

The editors would like to express their gratitude to the many people who contributed their words and photographs to this edition.



## HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

*At the start of the 2021-22 academic year, we had an assembly; the first whole school gathering for over 18 months. It was truly wonderful to see everybody congregated, and for the Great Hall to be beating as the physical and spiritual heart of UCS once again.*

*As the late Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, said:  
"To defend a country you need an army, but to defend a civilization you need education." My challenge to all of us in the UCS community that year, as we emerged into a brave new world, was to seize with relish the opportunities a UCS education offers. A chance for personal challenge and development alongside a chance to value the person next to us: a chance to play our part in defending and indeed extending our civilization. I hope readers of this Gower will feel we strived to do just that.*



**MARK J BEARD**  
Headmaster

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# RETURN TO PERFORMANCE



This year, pupils across the entire school foundation returned to the stage in a dazzling array of drama and musical performances. To feel the Lund Theatre and Great Hall in particular so full of life again has been so wonderful for pupils, teachers and parents alike.

The Senior School welcomed back audiences to the Lund Theatre firstly with November's sensational *Transitus* and Sixth production of *The Illusion*. The Middle School's *Shakespeare in Love* overcame a Covid-enforced delay to enjoy a similarly triumphant three-night run in March, before the Lower School's admirable *Peter Pan* ran in May. UCS Drama's three

productions balanced challenge with enjoyment for the respective casts and crews, fully satisfying a 20-month hunger for live theatre at Frognal. The 'old norm' resumed also for our musicians. The busy concert diary was dusted down as pupils, parents and staff reunited for concerts large and small in the Great Hall and GSLT. The programme reflected UCS Music's packed schedule and expansive output: Ensembles Concert, Autumn Concert, Lunchtime Concert series, International Women's Day, Senior Jazz at LAE Stratford, Entry Performance Platform, Flute Concert, Rock Concert, Summer Concert and Leavers' Concert. To name only some of the performances!

Moreover, there were Trombone and Brass Masterclasses and Trinity Acting showcases as the Music and Drama Departments reiterated their abounding commitment to opportunity and excellence. Throughout the Foundation, rich seams of acting and musical talent are mined as an enhancement to the co-curricular provision.

Often we don't know how much we have missed something until we get it back. The Junior Branch experienced such a realisation when the Autumn Concert signalled the return in earnest of the Holly Hill culture scene. From Years 3 to 6, the boys revealed their rapid musical development in an engaging and eclectic programme.

If this event brought the community back together in an atmosphere of joy and love of music, March's Spring Instrumental Concerts also featured a global live streaming service for friends and family. The first concert showcased Year 3 and 4 musicians, Woodwind Ensemble, Recorder Ensemble and Junior Choir; the second Year 5 and 6 instrumentalists, the JB Orchestra, Big Band, String Ensemble and Senior Choir.

The spotlight also shone on JB pupils' acting abilities, latterly with June's Year 6 production *Animal Farm*



**“THE LAUGHTER AND RAPTUROUS APPLAUSE OF THE AUDIENCE REWARDED MONTHS OF HARD WORK IN DRAMA LESSONS AS WELL AS ART LESSONS SPENT CREATING COSTUMES WITH PAPIER MÂCHÉ AND PAINT.”**



at the Lund. The laughter and rapturous applause of the audience rewarded months of hard work in Drama lessons as well as Art lessons spent creating costumes with papier mâché and paint. The Black Box production at the JB's Little Acorn studio included sketches, some made up from scratch, others improvised from initial ideas in class, in addition to more conventional published works adapted for the occasion. A cocktail of jokes, mime and poetry! The Year 4 show, *Around the World in Thirty Minutes*, was inspired by responses to reading *Kensuke's Kingdom* by Michael Morpurgo in English classes, with its attendant adventures and obstacles. The Year 3 Poetry Jam evoked acting, diction and performance skills, at the end of a term in which they had discovered various types of poetry. Besides performing published poets, the boys voiced their own creations, displaying confidence as Holly Hill's youngest cohort took centre stage.



Nor was the Pre-Prep exempt from the pleasure of welcoming back live audiences to the Lund. The boys delivered their December production of *Cinderella* with aplomb and the confidence shown by the Reception cohort was simply delightful. For the Summer Production, the boys brushed up their Shakespeare with a sublime rendering of *The Tempest*, packed with drama, singing and creative dancing. A notable credit, too, to the parents for some pretty wonderful costumes.

Other performance opportunities included the ever-popular UCS Pre-Prep Has Got Talent and a Summer Instrumental Recital featuring the excellent Year 1 Violin Quartet.

The expressive arts at UCS elicit intellectual curiosity, creativity, breadth of study and independence of mind from our young people and it has been nothing short of joyful to see them return in such splendour.

Contributions from

C. BHANTOA S. PATEMAN

C. DAWE S. LANIGAN-O'KEEFFE



# LIFE CHANGING BURSARY PROVISION



You may have seen the epithet “life-changing” applied to our bursary provision in the Senior School’s newsletter *The Frognal*. What’s undeniable is that our bursaries chime perfectly with the founding principles of a school established almost 200 years ago to provide an education different from contemporary standards.

Historically, this vision included educating children with no regard to race or creed, and by the mid-1920s UCS had raised the provision of fee-assisted places to the extent where 25% of pupils received 100% fee discounts. Now, rapidly approaching our bicentenary

in 2030, this motivation to give life-changing opportunities to young people who otherwise would not get them is a crucial part of who we are.

At the Senior School, we presently sponsor around 60 pupils a year with fee assistance. Virtually all places are completely free. Headmaster Mark Beard, says “we must aspire to extend this provision – there is much more we could and should do”. While bursaries are “life-changing” for recipients, they also greatly benefit our community as we strive to foster mutual exchange, empathy and cultural appreciation among our pupil body.

The transformative quality is definitely a two-way process, says Bursaries Coordinator, Oliver Bienias: “Bursary recipients strengthen our academic and co-curricular life; they enhance our social and cultural diversity which, in turn, better prepares pupils for life outside and beyond UCS.”

The 2021 figures showed that about 20% of Year 7 and Year 12 joiners received fee assistance. Mr Bienias offers these pupils bespoke pastoral care from the moment of application, always available to listen, advise and assist – in and out of the classroom.

His open-door policy is one example of the importance of relationships at UCS. For Jovana who joined UCS Sixth Form, the transition from all-girls state school to our Sixth Form was smoothed by a prevailing culture that prizes kindness, inclusivity, and an awareness of each and everyone’s place, role and responsibility within school and society. “Everyone was so friendly and class sizes were a lot smaller than in my old school, meaning teachers were more attentive to individual needs.”

“I love hearing from bursary recipients about the wonderful opportunities available, the incredible facilities, the pastoral support, the enriching co-curricular activities, and the chance to experience the expansive panoply of a UCS education,” adds Mr Bienias.

Geno arrived from a state primary and relished the enriched and varied curriculum delivered by teachers who “clearly enjoy sharing their love for a subject and exploring questions beyond the syllabus”. Geno reciprocated this passion during a sky-rocketing Frognal career: star member of robotics club, he participated in an international competition in the US, then had his own Physics experiment performed aboard the International Space Station. Where to go from there? Maths at Cambridge. “I am immensely

grateful to UCS for the quality of teaching and learning and unbounded support.”

Recently, the most popular degree courses for bursary recipients leaving UCS have been Engineering, Medicine, English, History, Maths and Economics. A survey of their chosen universities reveals Queen Mary (London), Bristol, Edinburgh, Imperial College (London), Oxford and Warwick as preferred destinations.

**“Our primary goal is to meet the growing demand for bursary places by securing sustainable funding to double the existing provision by our 200th anniversary. We intend to achieve this through a combination of donors supporting bursaries directly through revenue gifts, and building an endowment fund to secure the provision of sufficient bursaries longer term.”**

“The world should be their oyster,” says Assistant Head (Sixth Form), Rebecca Baxter. “We want them to care about academia, knowledge and education. However, our assistance also encompasses work experience opportunities and internships.”

A UCS bursary is much more than a launch-pad to elite universities or top jobs, however. It prepares pupils comprehensively for the long term. Bursary recipient Kaylem explains: “My teachers went above and beyond to ensure we became the best possible

versions of ourselves.” Routine one-to-one attention and care, and daily instilling of learning values, enable pupils to think, attempt and achieve the unthinkable. For Kaylem, “life wouldn’t be the same without the stellar education and cultural experiences UCS gifted me.”

Academic challenge, yes, but also care and kindness, given the equal emphasis placed on ensuring pupils have a supportive, structured and guided space to grow from child to young adult. This experience “led to real self-improvement academically and personally” for Daevasyaa who completed her A Levels at the UCS Sixth Form. “I became a more confident individual because the teachers showed me I could do things I wouldn’t have thought I was capable of,” she says. “I am now at my first-choice university.” If Philosophy at LSE is the stuff of a dream realised, the spirit that carried Daevasyaa there remains.

Unfortunately, not all schools can offer such opportunities, so UCS aims to increase the bursary provision ahead of 2030. “To support the current level of bursaries requires in the region of £1.3 million each year,” says Mark Beard, “which is met through a

combination of generous philanthropic support and revenues from our commercial enterprises. “Our primary goal is to meet the growing demand for bursary places by securing sustainable funding to double the existing provision by our 200th anniversary. We intend to achieve this through a combination of donors supporting bursaries directly through revenue gifts, and building an endowment fund to secure the provision of sufficient bursaries longer term.”

In affirmation of our commitment to the Bursary Programme, Stephen Warshaw, Chair of UCS Council, confirms that “extending our provision in this regard is of strategic importance for the diversity and inclusion of the school’s culture as we approach our bicentenary. We are most grateful to all those in the UCS community who are able to help in any way, big or small”.

**If you are interested in finding out more about our bursary provision or supporting our ambition to protect it in perpetuity through building an endowment fund, please contact [development@ucs.org.uk](mailto:development@ucs.org.uk) or visit the development page on our website.**



Contributions from  
**O. BIENIAS**



# PARTNERSHIPS



Those part of our community, whether presently as parents, pupils or staff or as Old Gowers looking back on their time at UCS, know that kindness, generosity of spirit and a sense of fun permeate it because of strong and positive relationships. Throughout 2021-22, it remained as important as ever that these relationships extended outwards beyond the school gate and into our community. Our partnerships provision has enabled the UCS community to forge links with numerous local schools, charities and organisations for the benefit of all involved.

A long-standing aspect of partnership work that continued to evolve this year was the running of Oxbridge and Medics interview evenings in the Senior School. As well as affording the opportunity for UCS applicants to be put through their paces in advance of the real thing, large numbers of pupils

from our partnership schools attend these also. This year we hosted (online, to best simulate the real thing which remained virtual) two Oxbridge evenings, one for STEM-related subjects and one for Humanities, and one Medics interview evening which were attended by over 230 pupils in total.

Partnership work also seeks to connect pupils together and 2021-22 was quite the year for this. Whether through evening events like the Nobel Laureate Lecture Series, a STEM spectacular with pupils presenting from every partnership school and an audience of over 200 people, weekly Maths mentoring sessions for local primary school children or collaborative art projects, UCS pupils of all ages have benefited from meeting and indeed working with children from across London. This is increasingly important in preparing our pupils for the collaboration and networking that lies beyond school

at university and in the world of work. Ms Holland, STEM Partnerships and Enrichment Coordinator, organised the Nobel Laureate Lecture Series and reflected, "It was a pleasure to listen to young people talk so passionately about their subject area. It was most impressive to see a large audience come to support our speakers and explore the field of STEM further." Mohammed, a Year 13 pupil at Westminster Academy, presented that evening and commented on the warmth of the event by saying: "When I met the other students that were presenting, everyone was really encouraging and had great ideas. It was a wonderful experience to present in front of STEM enthusiasts and a privilege to watch other students present their amazing ideas."

A bedrock of partnership work has always been the shared expertise and knowledge between teachers and schools. This manifested itself in lots of ways throughout the year but notably in the sessions delivered at the London Academy of Excellence (LAE), Stratford (one of our key partnership relationships) by Mr Abbott, Performing Arts Partnerships Coordinator, to help pupils there develop oracy skills. These practical workshops were designed to be friendly, informative and confidence building. Pupils at LAE also benefited from the expertise of Mr Da Silva, Head of Jazz, and the UCS Jazz Band who performed a series of jazz bops in Stratford on a sunny afternoon in March. Not only were feet tapping and heads nodding to the tunes,

but each song was punctuated by Mr Da Silva's thoughtful and interesting history of the genre, especially the ways in which Black History in the United States shaped the genre and how it has been performed.

Moving from the performing arts to the visual arts, the 'Connect/Disconnect' project between Year 12s at LAE and some of our very own Tranistus artists was a creative, collaborative triumph. Focusing on

**"The various evenings that UCS has organised to support with the interview process for the most competitive courses and universities have been superb in helping our best and brightest to reach their potential. Subject-specific presentation evenings, such as the STEM evening last September, have allowed our students to shine."**

MICHAEL TAYLOR  
Head of Sixth Form at Michaela  
Community School

the ways in which we explore and experience the space around us, notably London, the project consisted of six workshop sessions at UCS led by Ms McVicker, Visual Arts Partnerships Coordinator, as well as two exhibitions – one at UCS and one at LAE. The workshop sessions were designed to develop a number of skills including drawing, installation, design, digital manipulation and screen printing. The relationships that grew between pupils was a joy to see, as well as the

technical skill development of the LAE and UCS artists throughout the process. The pieces produced during this exciting project are currently on display at LAE after having been shown at UCS's Lund Gallery.

The progress made this year in partnerships for the performing and visual arts has proved that the inherently collaborative nature of these subjects can bring together different groups of pupils and prove fertile ground for future collaborations. Watch this space!

**“Our partnership work continues to be an exciting part of the life of the school. We relish opportunities to meet new people, connect with teachers and pupils in different settings and learn from their expertise, as well as share our own and our facilities. UCS’ partnerships do more than enrich the school’s wider community, they enrich our own too.”**

**SOPHIE BENNETT**  
Assistant Head (Partnerships and PR)

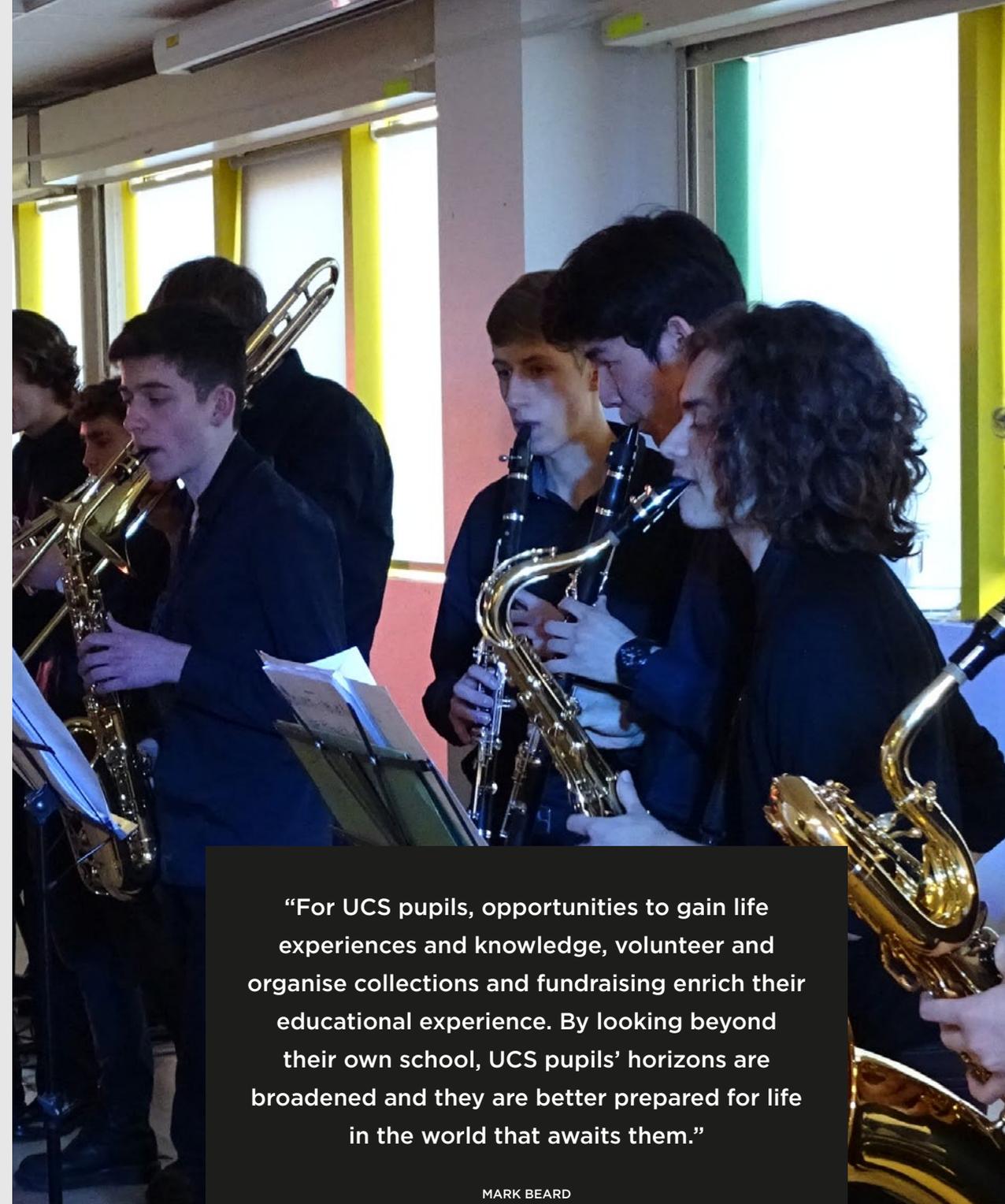
As well as fostering relationships with schools, secondary and primary, in the maintained sector, we are proud of our connections with local charities. One such charity supported by the entire UCS Foundation this year has been the North Paddington Foodbank. Annual collections for North Paddington have become a feature in the UCS Calendar with a real buzz around the event every October. The North Paddington Foodbank supports families in communities local to UCS who don’t always have the means to access essentials like toiletries, sanitary products, baby products and food. This year’s collection was masterminded by Tranistus pupils Dylan Ireland and Xavi Mesquita who demonstrated the best of UCS by taking charge of advertising the event and, on the morning of the collection, built boxes, stacked the van and ushered pupils to the playground where the collecting frenzy was taking

place. We then staged a second collection in March which held special significance as it gathered items for the charity’s recently established Baby Bank. A busy, productive and exciting year for partnership endeavour can only be achieved with the continued commitment of UCS pupils and staff, as well as those in the schools and community organisations with whom we work. This aspect of the provision goes a long way to enriching the fabric of our own community and we are ambitious about extending our partnerships in the very near future.

**“Many of our students struggle to find their voice and lack confidence, so to have these new sessions on offer has made an incredible difference. In total, 20 students were lucky enough to have sessions this year. It has been amazing to see these students now confidently speaking out in academic lessons and preparing for university interviews with more belief in themselves and a louder voice.”**

**FRAN BEDDING**  
Co-Curricular Manager  
at LAE, Stratford

*Contributions from*  
**S. BENNETT**



**“For UCS pupils, opportunities to gain life experiences and knowledge, volunteer and organise collections and fundraising enrich their educational experience. By looking beyond their own school, UCS pupils’ horizons are broadened and they are better prepared for life in the world that awaits them.”**

**MARK BEARD**  
Headmaster

# FOUNDATION SUSTAINABILITY



Sustainability is no mere slogan here, rather it is woven into the fabric of our Foundation, informing and influencing how we operate in the Senior School, Junior Branch and Pre-Prep. We are deeply conscious of our responsibilities to the local and wider communities in which we live and move and, increasingly, for the planet itself. It was a logical development, therefore, when UCS became a pioneering early signatory of Camden Council's Schools Climate Charter, setting a framework for sustainable progress.

Taking the lead is an inherent part of the UCS mind-set, something we witnessed when Frogna's Great Hall staged our inaugural Sustainability Open Evening. This landmark event gave pupils, parents and visitors the chance to meet and support companies, charities and groups – including the Junior Branch's Year 5 Eco Committee – that champion sustainable change. Hopefully it will prefigure other community engagement events that promote sustainability. James Firth, Foundation Environmental Impact Coordinator, noted: "We want to offer opportunities to recognise and respond to local, national and global responsibilities."

Our cross-foundational efforts – persistently and perennially driven by the pupil-led Green Impact Society (Senior School) and Eco Warriors (Junior Branch and Pre-Prep) – crystallised into a remarkable success in March when UCS became the first UK school to achieve gold recognition in every step of the UN's Climate Neutral Now Initiative. This historic award confirmed we had taken the necessary steps to become carbon neutral by measuring, reducing and offsetting current unavoidable emissions. The Foundation also secured One Carbon World's Carbon Neutral International Standard for a second straight year. The ultimate goal remains carbon zero, with energy efficiency technology being installed as we home in on totally renewable energy.

The focus on sustainable travel intensified too. The Senior School joined the Junior Branch and Pre-Prep in deploying the HomeRun app to encourage greater uptake of environmentally friendly travel options such as public transport and car-pooling. Similar messaging came from the Junior Branch's Scooter Day, with boys invited to come to school on scooters and tackle a playground obstacle circuit and slalom challenge. At Frogna, two bike maintenance workshops engaged pupils and staff with the same overall intent. It also warrants attention that the Pre-Prep and Junior Branch are Camden/TfL Gold STARS accredited schools.

Among other priorities our dedicated environmentalists, in tandem with the Foundation Sustainability Working Group, worked to improve our current recycling rate of 75%. Waste plastic collection points were established in the Design and Technology Department; a pupil-led assembly communicated recycling information for the Senior School and a 'Bin it to Win it' fundraising activity kept the spotlight on recycling. Further pupil-directed assemblies looked at COP26 – aka last November's United Nations Climate Change Conference – and Earth Day 2022.

Up at Holly Hill, Eco Committee members distributed posters warning of the consequences of climate change and dangers of plastic use and litter louting. They followed up with a litter-picking outing to Hampstead Heath. Year 6s prepared a school-assembly presentation on the causes and effects of global warming, with plans for a corridor display suggesting small lifestyle changes to help make a difference.



The Pre-Prep's Eco Warriors have been working hard on promoting biodiversity. Every pupil has been involved in planting fruit, vegetables and wild flowers in the Pre-Prep Eco Garden and during their weekly outdoor learning sessions at the Senior School allotment. They have also helped care for partridges, ducklings and caterpillars from eggs. As part of World Bee Day the children enjoyed a workshop with the UCS beekeeper to learn the important role they have in maintaining biodiversity.

Every Pre-Prep pupil is challenged to earn 'Pre-Prep Planet Protector' badges over the year by acting sustainably in school, for example by switching off lights. As part of our Foundation wide efforts to reduce energy usage the Eco Warriors led the 'Switch Off Fortnight' which saw us save 7.2% of energy.

The Senior School's Green Impact Society also hosted some brilliant guest speakers. John Kahekwa Munihuzi, founder of the Pole Pole Foundation, discussed gorilla conservation work and his holistic approach to sustainable community development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Conservationist Duncan Grossart spoke about the importance of rewilding and accelerating our re-engagement with the natural world.

The latter talk resonated with Green Impact's biodiversity team who had prepared a section of the Senior School campus for rewilding as part of a Biodiversity Garden. Green Impact also celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by receiving a Queen's Green Canopy Award for their achievement of planting more than 300 hedging trees to create a habitat for hedgehogs and other animals. DT pupils upcycled waste pallets to successfully implement an 'Insect Hotel Project'. And, icing the cake, Allotment Club gained a Level 3 in the RHS School Gardening Awards.

It wasn't all mud, sweat and tears for our green campaigners, however, who had two glamorous appointments in Kings Cross. A Year 10 and Year 12 contingent attended Sustainers Fest at Samsung



HQ for World Environment Day, meeting with fellow young change-makers from across Camden. Meanwhile, a joint Coding Club and Green Impact delegation, from Years 9 to 12, visited Google's glistening offices at the climax of a 'CAPS' project to build and code air-quality monitors.

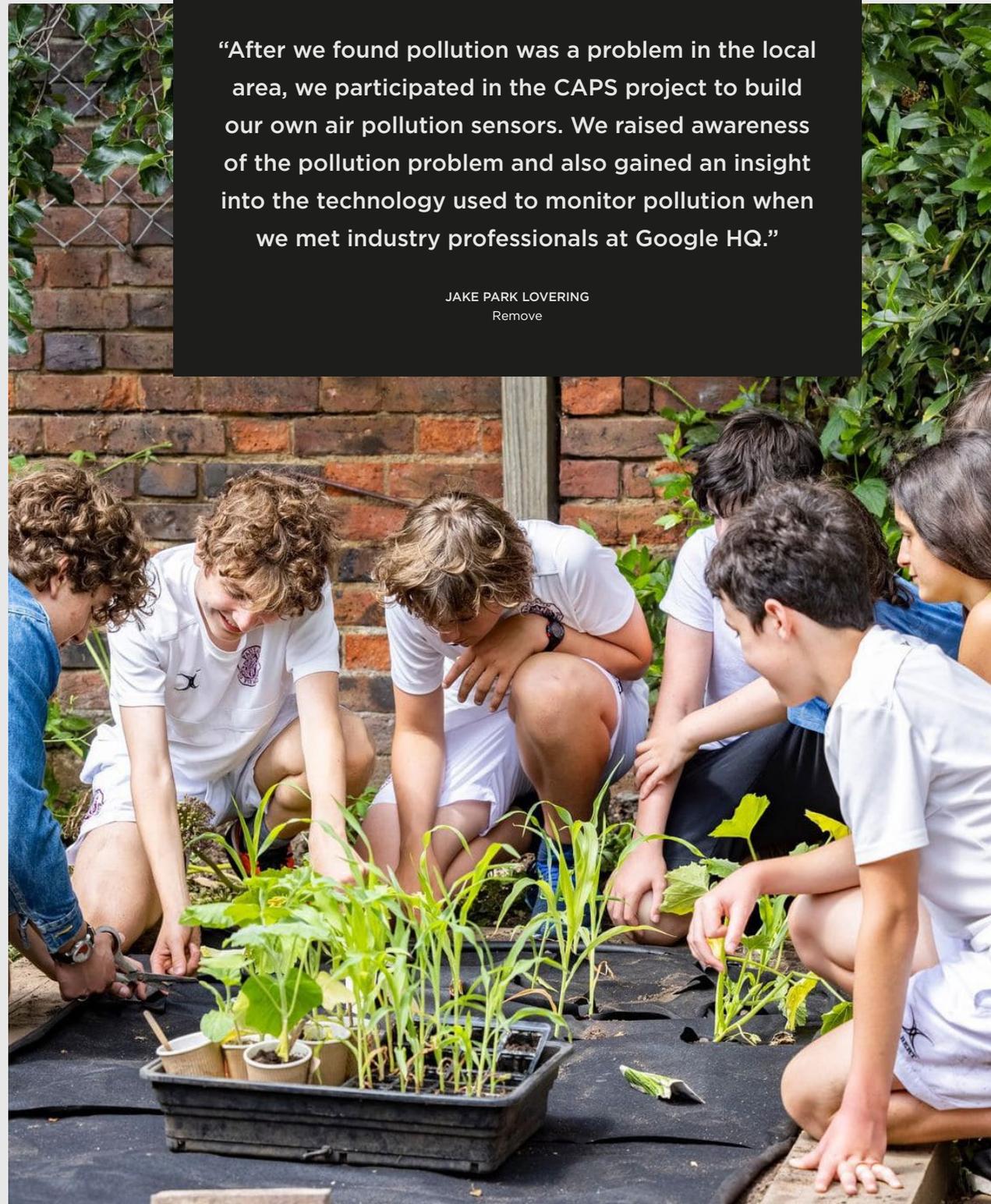
To seal an all-action year, UCS and Green Impact scooped the Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction. This international accreditation rewarded a process whereby pupils completed 11 tasks, including an environmental review and action plan, to supersede the criteria and win a Distinction. UCS was also shortlisted for the Green Award for Environmental Achievement in the Independent Schools of the Year 2022 awards. Hence 2021-22 finished on a high – yet not with complacency, since you can be certain our eco-conscious pupils want to push on in targeting further progress in sustainability.

**“By hosting inspirational speakers, like John Kahekwa’s talk on protecting endangered gorillas and Duncan Grossart’s passionate talk on rewilding, our members have been inspired to give their own talks to engage the larger school body in sustainability. We delivered assemblies on COP26, World Earth Day and how to recycle effectively.”**

GIOIA MCKENZIE  
Transitus

Contributions from

S. LENTON      P. CASEY  
J. FIRTH        K. JOHNSON



**“After we found pollution was a problem in the local area, we participated in the CAPS project to build our own air pollution sensors. We raised awareness of the pollution problem and also gained an insight into the technology used to monitor pollution when we met industry professionals at Google HQ.”**

JAKE PARK LOVERING  
Remove

# Lower School Houses: Rebooted, Renamed & Re-energised!

*2021–22 was quite the year for the Senior School's Lower School, with innovative developments further making these formative and crucial years distinctive, fun and memorable for boys in the Entry and Shell.*

Perhaps the most pronounced move was to relaunch the Lower School Houses, which were renamed following an extensive process that captured the imagination of pupils and elicited 140 nominations. The final decision pinpointed five pioneering individuals, past and present, connected to UCS's North London constituency: Sir Roger Bannister (Old Gower, trailblazing neurologist, record-breaking athlete); Sir Chris Bonington (Old Gower, mountaineer, charity fundraiser); Guy Kendall (forward thinking UCS Headmaster from 1916–36); Mary Macarthur (Scottish suffragist, activist for workers' rights); and Mary Seacole (British-Jamaican nurse in the Crimean War). All effected change, pushed boundaries and helped others.

Concurrent with the rebranding, House Captains were appointed to Bannister, Bonington, Kendall, Macarthur and Seacole to inspire pupil leadership and engagement.



“We freshened up the House system in the Lower School – changing the names and making sure there were more House competitions such as Sport, Music and quizzes. Also, we want the Years 7 and 8 mixing more, so there can be more role modelling between them,” explained Assistant Head (Lower School), Edd Roberts.

UCS tradition says that Houses, aka Demes, are an intrinsic part of school life, being vital forums for developing relationships, camaraderie, trust, loyalty and other key intangibles. Mr Roberts added: “There is a jump from Primary or Prep School. Some boys fly, some need support in the transition. Making them feel comfortable and happy so they can thrive really is part of our job.”

In addition to repositioning the Lower School Houses, Mr Roberts helped introduce two new awards: a leadership development programme entitled Young Leaders Award, and a mini-DofE, the Headmaster's Lower School Award. “It's what you could call ‘character education,” he said. “We are proud of the breadth of our co-curricular offering, our learning values and our expanded academic enrichment – yet these awards formalise some of the activities the boys are already doing.”

All the more opportunity, then, for our Lower School pupils to practise their ABCDs of aspiration, bravery, compassion and decision-making – plus ‘s’ for self-reflection, of course.

## Lower School House Captains 2021-22

**Bannister:** *Jake Portnoi & Nikolas Petoussis*  
**Bonington:** *Blake Kaye & Christian Dillon*  
**Kendall:** *Boris Buyakin & Jason Gholami*  
**Macarthur:** *Zachary Hirschovits & Arjun Jayaraman*  
**Seacole:** *Charlie Wake & Josh Schneider*

*Contributions from*  
**E. ROBERTS**

“I really enjoyed being one of the first Lower School House Captains.

I'm so glad that Lower School boys now have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and be able to prepare themselves for becoming Monitors – or even Captain of Monitors – later on in their school careers. As a House Captain I led and represented my house in the inter-house competitions. The boys chosen to be House Captains really represent the school through their kindness and willingness to work hard in everything they do, in fact, I would say that every boy joining the school should aim to become one.”

CHRISTIAN O'BRIEN DILLON

“I was delighted to be picked as House Captain for Macarthur. This involved doing a House Assembly and helping in the Shell Prize Giving, both of which were slightly nerve-wracking but once I got into these activities I thoroughly enjoyed them.”

ZACHARY HIRSCHOVITS

“I particularly enjoyed being able to help lead my new House, which adopted the name Seacole, and win countless new competitions including Taskmaster, quizzes and of course sports!”

JOSH SCHNEIDER

# House Competitions Thriving

*As many Old Gowers will attest, belonging to a House or, in particular at the Senior School, Deme is a memorable part of life at UCS. Competition between Houses and Demes in 2021–22 was lively and eventful with plenty of highlights to report on.*

In the Pre-Prep, members of the Dragon, Griffin, Pegasus and Sphinx Houses were all busy demonstrating excellent sportsmanship, collaboration and of course fighting team spirit! Each Friday, a Celebration Assembly is held and the children gather excitedly to find out which House has earned the most House points over the week, announced by the responsible House Captains and Deputies, who count the points from each classroom. Our House Cup half-termly winners for academic year 2021–22 were:

Autumn Term – 1st half	Griffin
Autumn Term – 2nd half	Dragon
Spring Term – 1st half	Sphinx
Spring Term – 2nd half	Griffin/Sphinx
Summer Term – 1st half	Pegasus
Summer Term – 2nd half	Dragon



The Pre-Prep pupils who were House Captains and Deputy House Captains should be so proud of the way they led their respective Houses this year, growing in confidence and developing their leadership skills throughout each term.

A particular highlight was watching them lead their Houses out with pride on Sports Day! The elected House Captains and Deputy House Captains for 2021–22 are below:

## Pre-Prep House Captains 2021-22

	Dragon	Griffin	Pegasus	Sphinx
Autumn Term – 1st half	Alexander Gehl Elijah Kardos	Lloyd Vega Ashar Jaffar	Adhiraj Gulhati Hani Al-Hasan	Raphie Ljungberg Harry Glatman
Autumn Term – 2nd half	Dev Kaushik Ethan Ho	Jeremy Yem Theo Freud	Julian Bund James Fishman	Archie Tager Alex Vayanos
Spring Term – 1st half	Xander San Jasper O'Connor	Christian Mouskos Theo Freud	Alfie Lea Ryker Vance	Jacob Vogl Aaron Kantor
Spring Term – 2nd half	Felix Burgel Maxim Bliznakov	Thomas Green Thomas Breaks	Khush Sen James Mitchell	Idodi Bethlehem Max Erturan
Summer Term – 1st half	Ethan Ho Alex Gehl	Ernest Travers-Smith Jeremy Yem	Ryker Vance Julian Bund	Jack Bower Archie Tager
Summer Term – 2nd half	Felix Burgel Elijah Kardos	Jack Samuels Theo Freud	Hani Al Hasan Alfie Lea	Harry Glatman Jacob Vogl

An exciting development at the Junior Branch related to their Houses this year was the introduction of a new House competition which runs alongside the Merit Trophy, known as the House Super Cup. Its purpose is to incorporate as many aspects of school co-curricular activities as possible into the competitions. This was implemented across the calendar year and will continue to involve more events in the future. For now, though, this year's focus was on Music, Cricket, Reading and Sports Day. After meticulously totting up all the points for 2021–22,

the results were in: Eve House clinched the trophy, followed closely by Campbell, with not much in it between Bentham and Simmons – the former pipping Simmons at the post for third spot. Credit to all concerned and kudos too to the House Leaders, Dai Cook, Stephen Lanigan-O'Keeffe, Adam Tyson and Simon Hall.

Special thanks also go to our House Captains who represented their Houses admirably.

Junior Branch House Captains 2021-22

Eve	Campbell	Bentham	Simmons
<i>Aarav Aswani</i>	<i>Zach Bogard</i>	<i>Tom Hall</i>	<i>Freddie Littner</i>

As the Senior School emerged out of the year group bubbles that dominated operations in 2020-21 and as restrictions lifted over the course of this year, one of the aspects of school life that was able to return to normal was the co-curriculum. A huge number of co-curricular activities took place this year and points won from every sporting, dramatic and musical Deme competition as well as every single commendation awarded throughout the year were added together to determine which Deme won the hotly contested Deme Cup. Some tricky mathematics indeed! This year the prestigious trophy was clinched by Underwoods which was a fitting final victory and goodbye to Mrs Isaac.

A key contributing event to the totals was Deme Song which took place on the final afternoon of the first half of the Autumn Term. Live-streamed to form rooms from the Lund Theatre, musical members of each Deme battled it out on the drums, guitar, microphone and more to win the first flagship Deme event of the year! Evans clinched the top prize with their unforgettable jazz-styled rendition of *Isn't She Lovely* and *Get Down on It* with a brass band to boot, Oliver Sykes taking charge of the mic on vocals and Max Globokar with a show-stealing electric guitar solo.

Deme Captains 2021-22

Baxters	Black Hawkins	Evans	Flooks	Olders	Underwoods
<i>Ross Doran</i>	<i>Amiran Antadze</i>	<i>Seb Clarke</i>	<i>Sam Abrahams</i>	<i>Sofia Erpici</i>	<i>Sam McQuaid</i>
<i>Sofia Jimenez-Berruecos</i>	<i>Ella Scheinmann</i>	<i>Alex Evers</i>	<i>Josh Imber</i>	<i>Benedict Johnson</i>	<i>Evie Pereira-Mendoza</i>
<i>Sam Ziff</i>	<i>Charlie Tyler</i>	<i>Marina Goldring</i>	<i>Sofia Rehman</i>	<i>Joel Rechtman</i>	<i>Leon Voulgaris-Cleare</i>

Contributions from  
**H. RITCHIE**  
**P. MCINTOSH**  
**J. LEWIS**



# Peer Mentoring

*Resilience is an oft-cited attribute at UCS and features in the learning values promoted in the Pre-Prep, Junior Branch and Senior School. One way that we have been seeking to support our pupils to talk about their mental health and build resilience is by connecting them to one another.*

In the national dialogue around children’s wellbeing, the importance of strengthening resilience has been sharpened following the pandemic and other intense, often upsetting, news stories encountered by our young people. It is not for nothing that they talk about a mental health epidemic among young people. However, the good news is that our pupils are increasingly happy to talk about their mental health and ever more aware of their friends’ wellbeing too.

By developing peer mentoring schemes, pupils are afforded the opportunity to speak openly about their experiences and feelings as well as to develop the skills of listening to and supporting their peers.

We have worked hard to facilitate this, individually and collectively, and one significant development during 2021–22 was to launch the Peer Education Project offered by the Mental Health Foundation.

**“I HAVE BEEN DOING PSHE AND MENTAL HEALTH LESSONS WITH YEAR 12S AND IT WAS A CHANCE TO SPEAK TO SOMEBODY OTHER THAN A TEACHER AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE A DIFFERENT KIND OF MENTORING.”**

FREDDIE CHUBB  
Entry



This project is a secondary-school based educational programme that gives young people the skills and knowledge required to safeguard their own mental health and that of their peers. Fifteen pupils from the Transitus were trained by Director of Wellbeing, Miss Kumarasinghe, as Peer Educators who have since delivered lessons on mental health to Entry classes.

Miss Kumarasinghe explained that the scheme’s successful rollout was entirely logical given the “already strong sense of wellbeing in pupils” as well as the fact that

“UCS enables them to feel confident with new information and empowers them to be bold and take on new challenges”.

**“SOME OF THE BEST PEOPLE TO TEACH ABOUT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH ARE YOUNG PEOPLE THEMSELVES, WHICH IS WHY WE DEDICATED TIME TO TRAINING OUR YEAR 12S.”**

MISS KUMARASINGHE  
Director of Wellbeing

The Peer Education Project constituted another foundation stone in our evolving strategy for wellbeing across the school. It definitely benefited both peer mentors and peer learners, strengthening relationships between different year groups. The cooperation, empathy, honesty, kindness, and respect for self and others on show in lessons also linked back to resilience and the rest of the four Rs.

Contributions from  
**B. KUMARASINGHE**

# Opportunities for Pupil Leadership

*Pupils of all ages, passions and ambitions have grasped opportunities to lead their peers this year. Through delivering assemblies, representing the interests of their fellow pupils and always exhibiting their school's Learning Values, UCS pupils are sure to lead the way.*



This was a year full of awards and achievements as our Pre-Prep classrooms were abuzz with pupils working hard to fulfil their potential. The boys faced challenges head on, both in daily school life and in various sporting and creative events throughout the year, demonstrating resilience, determination and perseverance. They embraced the behaviours of the Learning Dinosaurs and amazed their teachers, giving their best to every assignment. All four Houses – Dragon, Griffin, Pegasus and Sphinx – worked together, embracing a team spirit, and the termly House meetings were hubs of ideas, enthusiasm and cooperative learning.

It was wonderful to see the boys' affinity to their Houses grow stronger throughout 2021–22, which was so evident in the House Meetings. They worked collaboratively to discuss special events and celebrations, such as World Kindness Day, Red Nose Day and the Macmillan Coffee Morning. During activities like Sports Day, the boys' sportsmanship

really stood out. The multitude of awards and achievements collected are testament to our pupils' hard work, dedication and aspirations. They should be very proud of their efforts!

The end of each week saw the boys gather for the much-anticipated celebration assemblies, where hard work was rewarded. Award winners were those that consistently exhibited the learning behaviours that underpin the values of UCS. Exemplary effort, golden behaviour, kindness and courtesy were recognised. From golden certificates to golden pencils, stars and badges, the awards were endless, and the boys strived to achieve them.

In the Senior School, the positions of Deme Captaincy and Monitorship remained much sought-after this year. Jay Kermisch and Sara Zamet led the Monitors Team alongside Vice Captains of Monitors Ava Lang and Henry Leitch. Jay and Sara memorably walked in the Remembrance procession, gave stunning speeches at open evenings, assemblies and the Sixth Graduation and led the school's pupils through the first year without a lockdown since 2018-19!

**“HAVING THE PRIVILEGE TO SERVE AS ONE OF THE CAPTAINS OF MONITORS ABSORBED ME IN EVERY FACET OF SCHOOL LIFE AND IT WAS A JOY TO WORK WITH THE YOUNGER PUPILS.”**

JAY KERMISCH

*Contributions from*  
**R. BAXTER**  
**H. RITCHIE**  
**P. MCINTOSH**

## Captains of Monitors

Jay Kermisch  
 Sara Zamet

## Vice Captains of Monitors

Ava Lang  
 Henry Leitch

## Monitors

Charlie Benjamin  
 Anjali Cheung  
 Talia Dicks  
 Luca Joseph  
 Joe Kanerick  
 Liam Lichy-Lightman  
 Rahul Patel  
 Thomas Pemberton  
 Violet Reed  
 Jaisal Sanger  
 Leo Sassoon  
 Amelia Shaw  
 Joe Sinclair  
 Olivia Walker  
 Isabella Wartski



# The Sixth Form Union

*2021-22 saw the launch of the Sixth Form Union. Appointed to the posts of Wellbeing, Events, LGBTQ+, Women's and Diversity Officers, this dynamic and impressive group of Sixth Form representatives made waves in their inaugural year.*



Guided by regular meetings with Ms Baxter, Head of Sixth Form, the Sixth Form Union gently corralled their year group and indeed their whole section into taking part in enriching events and making UCS a more fun and lively place to be. It would be impossible to mention all of their brilliant work here but there are a few highlights to reference.

LGBTQIA+ Officers helped the Senior School commemorate Pride Month in June. The now annual painting of the crossing as you enter the Frognal site as a rainbow kicked off celebrations in collaboration with the established Feminist Society. Badges with the UCS logo set on top of the Pride flag were sold to pupils and staff with proceeds going to Mermaids and Micro Rainbow.

The Sixth Form Union's Events Officers played a key role in the organisation of the Sixth Form's Prom; a much-loved event in the series of events that mark our oldest year group's departure from Frognal every summer. Emmy Crawley in particular was instrumental in pulling off such a fabulous event on the Southbank:

"One of my roles has been to organise the Sixth Prom. The evening was a huge success and the months of planning and organising meant that everything went smoothly and exactly as I'd hoped. Not only did I enjoy the night, but the entire process taught me so much about the depth of organisation and communication skills that go into planning an event like this. It was a great way for everyone to say informal goodbyes to their classmates."

One of Oliver Sykes' proposals in his hustings speech to become Wellbeing Officer was a student-led support service where members of the Sixth Form could be trained to support their peers and younger pupils with their mental health in an informal way. He spearheaded this initiative and it will come to fruition in 2022-23 as the first cohort of the Student Support Service is trained in coaching techniques and made ready to support their fellow pupils. Watch this space!

Another highlight of the calendar led by the Sixth Form Union was the Black History Month cabaret evening which raised funds for Black Minds Matter. This joyful evening of performance, music and celebration of black artists coincided with an assembly also put together for the whole school to commemorate Black History Month. Similarly taking the lead in marking significant moments in the calendar, the Sixth Form Union's Women's Officers chose to highlight the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women with a donut sale raising money for Good Night Out, which is a charity which campaigns against drink spiking. In the Autumn Term Amber Mided also led a meticulously researched and powerfully delivered assembly to the Sixth Form to increase awareness around eating disorders.

Wellbeing: *Oliver Sykes & Leon Aziz*  
 Women's: *Georgie De Wynter & Amber Mided*  
 LGBTQIA+: *Julien Van Eeten & Nerea Lopez*  
 Diversity: *Arista Abbatulla & Faraz Rahman*  
 Events: *Emmy Crawley & Bella Wartski*

Contributions from  
**R. BAXTER**

The success of this inaugural group was summed up by Ms Baxter, who said: "The first ever Sixth Form Union has set the standard." The future of the Sixth Form Union also looks bright as the new officers were voted in following lively hustings in May. Oduko Soludo was voted in as the incoming Diversity Officer and said:

**"I WANT TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OVERFLOWING WITH DIVERSITY. TO REACH THIS GOAL, I WANT TO GIVE ASSEMBLIES AND DEVOTE FORM TIME TO ENRICHING OURSELVES WITH STORIES OF BLACK PEOPLE OF THE PAST, INFLUENTIAL WOMEN OF COLOUR, AND LGBTQIA+ PEOPLE OF COLOUR WHO HAVE REVOLUTIONISED THE MOVEMENT. ALSO, HOW TO COMBAT OUR OWN BIASES AND RACISM TOWARDS ALL PEOPLE OF COLOUR. IN SHORT, I HOPE THAT BY THE END OF MY UCS CAREER I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING I POSSIBLY COULD TO MAKE IT A BOILING POT OF DIVERSITY AND RESPECT"**

# Connections Across the Foundation

*Pupils who attend UCS are not just members of classes, forms, Houses, Demes or a school, they are members of an educational foundation. It was tremendous this year to begin to reestablish connections between pupils across the UCS Foundation following the dismantling of Covid year-group bubbles and also to remind pupils of the scale of the community of which they are part.*



Naturally, pupils and staff at the Pre-Prep are always excited to reinforce their connections with the boys and girls of the Junior Branch and Senior School. After learning about St Patrick's Day, the Pre-Prep enjoyed a visit from Lower Remove pupil Freddy Beard, the Under-14 world champion Irish dancer, who explained how he had started the sport while at the Pre-Prep several years before. Much to the delight of his junior counterparts, Freddy brought in his trophy and showcased some mightily impressive leaping.

The Big Draw was one notable opportunity for the UCS community to gather together to share their artistic talents. It was wonderful to see the Creative Arts and Sciences Studio buzzing, full of parents and siblings, working collaboratively to create a giant piece of artwork. The theme of this year's Big Draw was "make the change – sustainable living" and this linked very well with our wider focus on sustainability and responsibility.

Another way in which our pupils are connected is through the Sixth Form Volunteering Programme.

Transitus and Sixth pupils spend Friday afternoons for one term of the year undertaking voluntary work, much of it at local schools and charities. A group of pupils spend their placements volunteering within the UCS Foundation either by supporting pupils from the Pre-Prep with their outdoor learning in the Frogna allotment or by heading to the Junior Branch to support in academic lessons and sports. For many of these Sixth Formers, it is a lovely opportunity to give some time back to the schools from which they joined the Senior School or, for pupils who joined UCS later, to develop crucial communication skills and patience.

Separately from this, reading sessions between Reception and Entry pupils in the AKO library at Frogna also provided a meaningful experience for our young protégés. Such moments strengthen the ties between the UCS generations, and on the back of them, it is lovely to see different cohorts greet or wave to each other whenever subsequent encounters occur.

As we continue to move forward without the restrictions of the last couple of years, we look forward to continuing to connect our pupils with each other through shared experiences, learning and charitable endeavours.

**"I REALLY LOVED VISITING MY OLD SCHOOL AGAIN AND THE CHILDREN WERE ESPECIALLY FASCINATED BY HOW THE SENIOR SCHOOL WORKS AND DIFFERS FROM THE JUNIOR BRANCH."**

ALEX SILVERTHORNE  
Transitus

**"VOLUNTEERING AT THE UCS JUNIOR BRANCH INVOLVED ME HELPING YEARS 3-5 WITH VARIOUS SUBJECTS SUCH AS MATHS AND ENGLISH AND PROVED TO BE A GRATIFYING EXPERIENCE. TEACHING NEW IDEAS AND METHODS IN MATHS PARTICULARLY HIGHLIGHTED THE CHILDREN'S UNWAVERING ENTHUSIASM AND MADE IT ALL THE MORE NOURISHING AND ENJOYABLE."**

HUSAM ABDALLA  
Transitus



Contributions from

N. WATT  
S. BENNETT



“Arts and sciences are branches of the same tree.”

# Results & Destinations

*In the first year of publicly examined GCSEs and A Levels since 2019, UCS pupils shone. Both year groups worked hard and with good humour during lockdowns and Covid absence to achieve grades that did them great credit.*



At A Level, 45% of the grades awarded were at A\*, with 81% at A\* or A and 96% at A\*-B. This is the best set of A Level results in the school's history. In Music, German, Greek, Computer Science, Philosophy, Mandarin and Further Maths, every pupil secured either an A\* or A. Moreover, 32 pupils in the year group achieved at least 3 A\*s.

In the school's best-ever set of publicly examined GCSEs, 53% of grades were at grade 9 and 77% of grades were grade 9 or grade 8. Sixteen pupils scored a clean sweep of grade 9s and 43 achieved nothing lower than grade 8. Pupils performed outstandingly in a number of subjects. Some 69% of pupils were awarded grade 9s in Physics and 66% in Biology. In Music, German, English Language and Physics the average grade was 9.

This year 89% of our leavers are going on to undergraduate study with 78% taking up places at their first-choice universities, including some of the most renowned institutions in the world; 12 of this year's leavers have gained places at Oxford or

Cambridge and the courses they will pursue include Experimental Psychology, Modern and Medieval Languages, Music and Engineering. Additionally, pupils are heading to the very best institutions in North America, including Harvard, Berkeley, McGill and Chicago. All of our medical applicants met the conditions of their first-choice universities and will start undergraduate courses this autumn at medical schools such as Nottingham, Leeds and Bristol.

Many leavers are going to study courses that reflect their own maturing passions and interests. These include Architecture at UCL's Bartlett School of Architecture, Art History at The Courtauld, an MoD apprenticeship in Defence Weaponry, Dentistry in Bulgaria and Fashion Design Innovation. Film and television courses have also proved particularly popular, and our students clinched a number of offers from prestigious institutions.

On both results days, teachers got the chance to reflect and celebrate the individual successes of our pupils. This was certainly the case for our 2022 leavers who shared their excitement on the day. Charlie Tyler was going on to study Medicine and looking forward to starting his

*Contributions from*

**M. ENGLISH  
T. UNDERWOOD  
L. JENKINS**

course at Leeds following his experience working in the Covid vaccination programme. Charlie was awarded straight A\* grades in Biology, Chemistry, Psychology and the Extended Project Qualification: "I'm overwhelmed and surprised. Just really, really happy. Since working on the vaccination programme I've got a taste of what it feels like to work in a healthcare setting. People of all ages and

walks of life have come in and asked me questions and I'm just so excited to get started on the course."

**"IT IS WONDERFUL TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNISE THE HEIGHT OF ACHIEVEMENT THESE RESULTS REPRESENT FOR THESE PARTICULAR COHORTS. OUR CHARGES DESERVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY THESE EXCELLENT GRADES. AND, TOO, MUCH CREDIT GOES TO THEIR SUPPORTIVE FAMILIES AND TO THE UCS STAFF FOR THEIR UNSTINTING EFFORT AND COMMITMENT TO ENSURE THE BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE ARE HERE TO HELP."**

MARK BEARD

Anjali Cheung collected straight A\* grades in Psychology, Maths, Spanish and the Extended Project Qualification. Anjali begins her undergraduate studies at Oxford in Experimental Psychology: "Teachers here are so engaging and teach topics that stretch you beyond the specification. I'm looking forward to the further freedom and breadth of study at Oxford with so many choices of what to study."

Seth Williams will be studying History at the

London School of Economics. Having secured A\*s in Greek and Latin and a D3 in History, Seth explained which aspects of the course and university study he was anticipating most keenly: "The course at the LSE is so broad and theme-based as well as international in its focus. I'm excited to specialise as the course goes on and also to take advantage of the free credits to try new things!"

# Enrichment Beyond Lessons

*As part of our Foundation-wide commitment to breadth of study and a liberal approach to education, opportunities to learn beyond the classroom continued to permeate life at Frognal, Holly Hill and College Crescent this year. Ranging from vikings, shadow puppets and app-building, UCS pupils have been busy!*



In the Senior School, one obvious offshoot of this commitment is the term-long provision of Friday-afternoon Academic Enrichment for Sixth Form pupils. These sessions enable deeper delving into topics of interest in the company of subject specialists. It is a window of opportunity recently extended to pupils in the Middle School. During the Summer Term, the Remove cohort were invited to pick from an array of fascinating courses designed to develop knowledge, research skills and learning habits. Each course had a cross-curricular spin and so involved two or more teachers from across the subject disciplines. Pupils built apps in 'Appy Hour' which blended Computer Science with Design & Technology; they discovered behavioural economics in 'Are our Decisions Rational' – a course that fused Economics and Philosophy – while 'That's Epic' brought together English and Classics in reviewing epic works ranging from the Babylonian literature of *Gilgamesh* to latter-day TV hit *Game of Thrones*.

Another central pillar of the academic enrichment provision at Frognal remains the Morris Lecture Series. This year, Dr Dell presented on 'Growing Artificial Atoms' and Ms Lewis's lecture went 'Beyond the Archive: Reconstructing Queer (hi) stories'.

Enrichment is also celebrated during dedicated Enrichment Weeks when departments join forces to put on activities and sessions tailored to enrich pupils in their subject areas. Each week has a theme and the 2021–22 programme required a mutually beneficial collaboration between the Economics, Geography, History and Politics Departments that focused on borders; and between the Dance, Sport and Psychology Departments in investigating 'Matter Over Mind'.

The pupils and teachers of the Pre-Prep love an opportunity to dress up or celebrate, from charity days to days with a specific subject focus. One early example was Roald Dahl Day when the children explored Dahl's magical tale *The Minpins*. Another famous author, Sharon King-Chai, returned to the Pre-Prep to share her book *Starbird* with the children alongside a workshop on printing and mark making.

For National Coding Week, the pupils programmed their coding robot Sphero to navigate mazes. Key Stage One boys also built chariots and got Sphero to move them around! Food Technology was needed for Year 1's Heroes Tea Party, where they celebrated their first term by tucking into the beetroot chocolate cakes they had made in lessons.

Friendship Week was an invitation to consider how 'Kindness Is A Superpower' and refocus on the value of kindness in our classes, while a visit from the NSPCC and its Buddy mascot taught the children about staying safe. Later in the year, Safer Internet Day involved a 'Perform!' workshop where pupils considered how to stay safe online through games and role play.

The Pre-Prep celebrated Black History Month with a drumming workshop and the Lunar New

Year with a wonderful display. With lots of Asian cultures represented at the school, many children shared how they celebrate this beautiful festival.

Temperatures plunged as Year 1 welcomed polar explorer and artist Richard Symonds to share his experience of Antarctica and put on a dazzling workshop on drawing animal eyes. Then arrived a 'Mad Scientist' for Science Week and an exploration of the wonderful world of fire.

**DURING THE SUMMER TERM, THE REMOVE COHORT WERE INVITED TO PICK FROM AN ARRAY OF FASCINATING COURSES DESIGNED TO DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE, RESEARCH SKILLS AND LEARNING HABITS.**

Science Week also centred on the school ducklings as pupils charted their growth and development, especially on the Quack Cam.

To reinforce the boys' understanding of sustainability a 'Super Sustainable Structures' week-long project, competition and celebration was enjoyed by every year group who split into teams to design and build structures with sustainable elements such as wind turbines and solar panels. To complete a bumper packed year of enrichment in the Pre-Prep, Reception

had a shadow puppet demonstration which explained the world of shadows and how they can be used to create effective puppets. Puzzle and Problem Solving Day had an exciting 'Shipwrecked' theme and World Bee Day was a chance to make 'bee' crafts and study all things apian.

Herbs also formed part of a fascinating and thoroughly enriching Viking Day at the Junior Branch. This began when Year 5 entered the school hall and encountered a Viking – well, somebody



TO REINFORCE THE BOYS' UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY A 'SUPER SUSTAINABLE STRUCTURES' WEEK-LONG PROJECT, COMPETITION AND CELEBRATION WAS ENJOYED BY EVERY YEAR GROUP WHO SPLIT INTO TEAMS TO DESIGN AND BUILD STRUCTURES WITH SUSTAINABLE ELEMENTS SUCH AS WIND TURBINES AND SOLAR PANELS.

Contributions from  
 E. SZEKELY  
 E. CHAITOWITZ  
 N. NAVARRO-BALLOCH  
 H. FRANKS

dressed as one – who explained their tasks for the day. The pupils proceeded from one workstation to another, from candle waxing to writing, which involved candle string, melted wax, ink and runes – the ancient letters or characters used by Vikings. Activities at the various other stops included making contemporary weaved designs and creating runes, ogres and candle holders from clay. So more hot wax!

Later the boys enjoyed replicating the three-line attacking formation favoured by the Vikings: the first row with spears and shields, the second with shields and the third with bows. Equally entertaining was the practical introduction to Archaeology, meaning strange artefacts that needed uncovering, with a brush, from boxes packed with soil and then labelling.



# Outdoor Learning

*There is no place quite like a school allotment, which not only offers shade when needed, but also provides a quiet space for relaxation and creativity as well as a 'loud' one in which to exert energy and ideas.*



The Pre-Prep's first allotment visit of 2021-22 showcased mightily impressive sunflowers. Planted by pupils, then nurtured by nature through the summer, these sunflowers were a fine example of humans and nature working in harmony. Their inviting blooms lured bees from the UCS hives and thus we saw up close the first stage of pollination.

In fact, David the beekeeper was kind enough to come and teach the children about pollination and beekeeping. The boys then spent an afternoon making nesting tubes from baking paper in the hope of expanding the bee population.

We are privileged to share the allotment with other creatures including an elusive fox, a parakeet, some sneaky squirrels and other wildlife, both land-loving and pond-dwelling. Before Christmas we also hoped to attract one of our most beloved characters by making our own reindeer food from oats and birdseed. Perhaps he visited after dark...

Autumn Term also reveals the abundance of harvest and so we gave thanks for our plants and trees by celebrating tree dressing day. The children pondered the gifts of nature and their own individual place in the wonderful cycle of life. We used natural materials to make seasonal decorations to take home as reminders to appreciate our world.

The redevelopment of the pond meant a habitat complete with frog spawn, newts, water boatmen and damsel flies for the boys to marvel at come spring. On land they deployed their building skills – as well as pine cones, bark, berries, leaves and sticks – to create habitats for their favourite mini beasts. String and mallets finished the job of erecting impressive bug hotels. The budding engineering continued as Year 2 used clay to recreate ancient monuments. The allotment briefly accommodated small versions of the pyramids, Stonehenge and Uluru.

Summer Term saw the planting of the vegetable garden. Hopefully the naughty squirrels behaved themselves and, come harvest time, we will have plentiful potatoes, carrots, radishes and beans. We also collected seeds from our snacks and planted watermelon, apple, pear and tomato seeds.

Back at the Pre-Prep, the living wall attracted more invertebrates to the playground than ever before, which helped to inform and consolidate our Reception learning. The children counted legs and body parts and watched the butterflies flutter. At the luscious herb garden, the boys were amazed at the aromas elicited when they gently rubbed the leaves.

*Contributions from*  
**S. STRATTON**

Let's not forget the Eco Garden either: a busy space for investigating plant life cycles. As part of Year 1's study of desert habitats, we planted succulents, and as Summer Term came to an end, we started making compost with the reintroduction of the wormery. How better to learn about recycling than from the experts?



# World Book Day

*World Book Day is always a highlight of the UCS calendar, being celebrated in each of our three schools to foster a love of reading and story-telling.*



At Frognaal, Entry and Shell pupils participated enthusiastically in a special World Book Day quiz while a Six Word Story competition attracted thought-provoking responses from the Middle School, Sixth Form and staff members alike.

Head Librarian, Mrs Davison, explained: "Our competition entrants were invited to use Hemingway's famous six-word story 'For sale: baby shoes, never worn.' as their inspiration for telling a story in only six words. The range of entries was impressive and varied, which made choosing the winners extremely difficult! However, four winning entries stood out."

These two competitions were devised by the AKO Centre library team who also had the pleasure of staging a World Book Day storytelling session for the youngest members of our Foundation. It was a real joy, therefore, to welcome Pre-Prep pupils back to the AKO Centre for the first time since the pandemic.

Dressed as their favourite book characters and guided by Ms Lenton (or, for World Book Day purposes, 'the good witch'), the boys arrived at the AKO Centre Library ready for adventure. Here, our young audience of Harry Potters, Willy Wonkas, superheroes, monkeys and much more settled on the library carpet to be transported by thrilling stories narrated by Entry boys. It was a heartening experience for both readers and listeners.

As if that wasn't enough fun for one Pre-Prep day, the pupils' College Crescent home was transformed into Peter Pan's twinkling Neverland as a film crew from the Never Ending Story organisation came calling. The crew produced films of different books linked to every year group's study which the children had written scripts and made props for. They relished their moments in the spotlight; an experience that cemented their love of reading.

Fancy dress was also the order of the day at the Junior Branch, bringing a wonderful buzz to Holly Hill as pupils revealed their assumed identities and the inspirations behind them. This year's programme was themed, with different book offerings for each age group. Year 3 were introduced to a seemingly long forgotten classic, *Winnie-the-Pooh*. They painted images of this adorable hero using water colours and produced outstanding outwork in an activity organised by Mrs Crossley.

Year 4 discovered the adventures of a swashbuckling doll named *Traction Man* and his loyal best friend Scrubbing Brush. The boys loved writing little booklets about these characters and

illustrating them. Meanwhile, Year 5 welcomed author Chris Bradford of *Young Samurai* fame, who taught them how to write action scenes and encouraged them to try writing their own. He even brought his own real-life samurai sword – let's just say the boys were mightily impressed! Finally, Year 6 enjoyed extra Drama rehearsal time, fine tuning the JB's Summer Term production of *Animal Farm*. They designed and made flags representing the concept of animalism. Roll on Thursday 2nd March: World Book Day 2023!

## Competition winners

*He came home late. Too late.*

**Carlo von der Tann** – Lower Remove

*The summary of history: Rome fell.*

**Seth Lockwood** – Remove

*I asked him. His response, silence.*

**Tyrell Sylvan** – Upper Remove

*The button pressed, the world ended.*

**Mr Fernando** – Head of Economics



Contributions from

**P. DAVISON**

**S. LENTON**

**S. HALL**

**E. SZEKELY**

# Poetry



Poetry came alive at UCS in this year's various poetry competitions. Year 3's poetry was inspired by the song in *George's Marvellous Medicine* and they created their very own marvellous concoction. The winner in this category was Sammy Levy with his poem – *Potion Poem*. Year 4 boys were inspired by Grace Nichols and local poet John Keats. Their poems conveyed the theme of travel and the desire to be in a different place and the winner was Benji Roche with *Britain Rocks*. Year 5 have been listening to Pink Floyd's *Echoes* which sparked the writing style of a stream of

consciousness. Some of the poems were remarkable. The winner in Year 5 was William Lacey with *Echoes*. Year 6 had the theme of doors and were challenged to think about the significance of these everyday objects. The winner of the poetry competition this year was Daniel Dillon with his poem *The Door*.

In the Senior School, Jack Howell, Lucas Keane and Oliver Sykes each emerged victorious in their sections of the school.

Contributions from

S. HALL

H. HARDINGHAM

## The Door

*A door can be many things, physical or real  
Some are made of congealed wood , some are  
opportunities to steal.  
There is much to be found in mystery and awe  
If you simply go and open a mystical door*

*A door is like opening a silent dream floating  
softly through your mind.  
Or a glistening golden sunrise on the horizon  
coming from behind  
If the rain starts to pour  
Go and open the door*

*Some doors are to protect the unopened treasures  
that slumber behind  
Or to keep secrets far from people's minds  
To make sure things are kept safe , the things  
people never saw  
These are the jobs that can be fulfilled by a door*

*Maybe outside there is a blood red rose , bleeding  
from winters bruises  
Or people playing an endless game called time  
where everyone loses  
Maybe there is a vivid spark dancing in a fire  
Watching as its fellow flames rise higher and  
higher*

DANIEL DILLON - YEAR 6

*Or maybe just a single drop of rain dancing on  
your thumb  
At Least that door has not shut on someone*

*If there is a rolling storm in the sky ahead  
You can try a different door instead  
Not every door may work for all  
But if you have not opened that door you would  
of not known what was behind at all*

*Now you now all these things and maybe you will  
learn more*

*There is more to what you first see when you  
observe a door*

## Unveiled

*Generation Z you say,  
Always fatigued and with no motivation.  
Lazy, ungrateful, quiet is what I get told.  
Except I am not what I seem.*

*Lack of morals I hear,  
Missing family values and impassive.  
Being rude, bratty and complaining is what I am  
best at.  
Little do you know family times are still greatly  
treasured.*

*Everything handed over on a silver plate, you say.  
“We had to work for it” is what I always hear.  
However if you really tried to listen to me, you  
would realise all is not as it seems.*

*Master of the thumb, you say.  
Staring into a computer, like a vampire dead in the  
night.  
Working my thumbs and fingers like puppets,  
braindead, day and night.  
A world of wonders that feeds my imagination, and  
quenches my thirst for knowledge.  
And would you believe that games with friends  
also need communication, organisation and  
collaboration in this seemingly lifeless rectangle?*

*Struggling with friendships, I hear.  
Extrovert over the screen, introvert face-to-face.  
Apparently even eye contact is increasingly  
strenuous.  
I have scars to prove that we still tackle and brawl.  
And who's laughing now? Two years of lockdown,  
see stanza above!*

*All the pressures do build up on top, threatening to  
fall at the slightest push, the smallest remark or the  
next task.  
Little do you know of all the work I put in daily; the  
quietness or ungratefulness is only me showing I am  
a little overwhelmed.*

*Perhaps the more you say it the more I believe,  
Perhaps encouragement and an open mind is what  
I truly need.  
Let me grow with trust, and you might just watch  
me succeed.  
I am not what I seem.*

JACK HOWELL - ENTRY

## Onwards

*I must go on.  
Through the glare of my surroundings;  
A sea of meaningless faces and places,  
My muscles tense and strain:  
The weight of the world dragging heavily behind  
me as I move.*

*One foot in front of the other I press on,  
Dragging myself upstream as I continue on the  
path.  
Currents of moisture cascade down my forehead:  
Sending pinpricks of light dancing across my  
vision;  
I succumb to the incessant whispered promises of  
rest that envelope my mind.  
I must go on.*

*Step. Step. Step.  
Rhythm is a healer of sorts,  
The focus it demands the sole reprieve for a weary  
traveller:  
My mind embraces its monotony,  
Its simplicity.  
Step. Step. Step.*

*My conscious mind dwells temporarily on the  
prospect of food,  
Giving vigour to my stride - though not forever.  
I dwell on other things as my trail of thought  
continues to wander:*

LUCAS KEANE - LOWER REMOVE

*Endless laps completed in the water -  
Shouting coaches,  
Thrown floats,  
An eternal chorus of “Work harder!” “Not enough!”  
“Go faster!”  
Pushing my limits is no foreigner to me.  
As I did then, I must go on.*

*The hue my skin akin to that of a beetroot,  
My breathing short and irregular,  
Muscles unresponsive as my house swims into view:  
Nearly there.*

*Step. Step. Step.  
Done.  
I glance at my watch - the time reverberating  
through my skull.  
My best ever.  
I acknowledge my hard work that day,  
By tomorrow I know my next challenge.  
I must go on.*

*The art of constantly pushing myself on is a  
language I have learned by heart.*

## Abstraction?

*Feeling  
eludes me.*

*Your feeling eludes me. Love*

*Fickle  
is not divulged.*

*Existent in Your  
not just in my  
imagination*

*(fantasies)*

*I hope.*

*Say it! Say Love! Say something!*

*Other than*

*'Sorry'*

*of course.*

*I thought -*

*Ha! I thought -*

*our loves would entwine*

*Your bloom; so perfect, so elegant;*

*would*

*bond*

*with mine,*

*and in time we would climb to the beat of our*

*own rhyme*

*Unity so perfect, so elegant it should be a crime.*

*But the votes have been cast,*

*the ballot has shut.*

*I for Her, Her for him.*

*I shouldn't have voted. It was too unexpected.*

*I have cremated our friendship*

*Love the flames.*

*Never again.*

*In my imagination*

*(fantasies)*

*Love*

*(so perfect, so elegant)*

*shall remain.*

*Beguiling untruths*

*I prefer to*

*Truth plain.*

OLIVER SYKES - SIXTH



# Research & Pedagogy

*Whether in the Sciences, Arts or Humanities, UCS teachers are experts in their own academic fields but they also engage keenly and regularly with developing pedagogical trends and practices to make sure that their lessons and approaches to the classroom are research-informed. This was particularly the case in 2021-22 with the inaugural UCS Research Review.*

You need only spend five minutes in the UCS common room to recognise how very invested our teachers are in developing their practice. The reading material is a dead giveaway, with many of the available books, tomes and journals being devoted to best practices in teaching and learning as well as the careful honing of a chosen craft.

One novel way in which our teachers self-reflect and share best practice is to contribute to the UCS Research Review which, in 2021–22, went to print for the first time. The inaugural issue showcased a remarkable array of innovative research carried out by UCS staff, including colleagues studying for a Master's. The journal exemplified how our teachers dedicate significant amounts of time and effort to a close consideration of their work and how UCS, as a school, is committed to evidence-informed policy and practice.



“We can be thankful that our teachers are undertaking such outstanding research both within and outside of the classroom,” says Headmaster, Mr Beard. “UCS is committed to a research-based approach in its teaching practice,” adds Charlotte Carter, Pre-Prep Teacher and Director of Research and Pedagogy. “We understand how important pedagogical research and professional development are to ensuring gold-standard teaching and learning. Throughout the Foundation, staff are encouraged to pursue their interests, share their findings and engage in thoughtful discussions to further enhance the education of pupils.”

The first Research Review contained original and expert research, an extended essay and a review section of recent books about – you guessed – teaching and learning. Now, practitioners from our Foundation as well as partner schools are making contributions to a second issue of this successful publication.

For the inaugural iteration, the ten-strong editorial team headed by Head of Research Ms Taylor benefited from a support cast of a dozen contributing writers and reviewers. The research relayed inside ranged from the impact of gender, subject choice and high attainment on low-level classroom disruption to marking practices, via pupil motivation levels, and the impact of single-sex classrooms on girls studying Physics. “Cultivating this research-based approach to the development of our practices is clearly a good thing – and potentially even better if this evidence effects positive change in the classroom, school and wider community,” says Ms Taylor.

*Contributions from*

**E. TAYLOR**

**C. CARTER**

**P. MILTON**

**K. MATTHEWS**

In addition to the staff publication, teachers from across the Foundation are invited to a termly TeachMeet, a collaborative space where they volunteer to present on a range of topics bespoke to our three schools. A termly Journal Club is also offered, where academic pedagogical articles are suggested, read and discussed in an open and encouraging forum.

One spoiler regarding the next Research Review is to reveal that staff spent some of their summer holidays reviewing books on such contrasting topics as challenging the extrovert ideal in schools, transforming teaching and learning through talk, and understanding how we learn. Now that's commitment.

**“We strive to create and foster a culture of evidence-informed practice in our teaching and learning, ensuring a bridge between what goes on in classrooms on a day to day basis and the latest education research that has been published. Such research can often be found in lengthy academic journals that are inaccessible to busy teachers or may seem inapplicable to what we do every day. Thus, it is important to make it easy for teachers to access research that is relevant to them and that will help inform teaching practice whilst at the same time appreciating and acknowledging the value of experience within our specific context.”**

**PATRICK MILTON AND KATIE MATTHEWS**  
Directors of Teaching and Learning  
at the Senior School

# Stand Out Work

*As is long-standing tradition in The Gower, these pages include some abridged versions of stand out work by our pupils. We hope that you enjoy reading them.*

## The Dump of Disappointment

The barbaric, decaying, vile pile of pipes was filled to the brim with infinite amounts of rubbish. Meanwhile, the stench of decaying mice horribly pervaded the endless dump, which was so packed it piled up to the sky! It was as boring on the eye as looking at an empty bookshelf. It also smelt like rotten flesh. Even the sewers smelt better than this barren mess. The merciless rain drummed down on the fragile, gloomy, shunned house.

## The Dump of Delight

The luminescent, glowing forest shimmered in the sun. The blazing, scarlet parrots vibrantly flapped around the pulsing forest while the bioluminescent tree frogs sat on the forest floor. A once barbaric, decaying pile of pipes had become a green heaven!

Above the canopy, the toucans sang happily in the emergent layer like a choir with howler monkeys as the bass. The snakes hissed, the parrots cawed and the lions roared as loud as any dragon. The fragrant smell of honey permeated this glimmering forest. The smell was like nothing you had ever smelt before.

LUCA DAVIS - YEAR 3

## The Count of Monte Cristo

Dantes was struggling. It took all his effort to keep on putting one arm in front of the other as he swam. His skin turning blue, Dantes arrived at the outcrop. He took a long, deep breath and started to climb. It was slow, painful work, and he couldn't get a proper grip. Gradually rising along the cliff face, he was almost at the top when a long, piercing shriek was emitted to his left.

Horrified, he turned his head to see that in his desperation he had climbed into a rather large pelican nest – and the mother, staring at him with its cold, emotionless eyes, was not happy. Seconds seemed to stretch into hours when all of a sudden the pelican lunged with its massive beak at Dantes's eye. Dantes just managed to dive out of the way in time but at the price of losing his grip. As a last resort, he grabbed the cliff edge and swung himself up onto a jutting piece of rock. He then heard the pelican behind him. It was chasing him, and it was mad! Drawing upon his last reserves of energy, Dantes scrambled wildly to the top of the rocky outcrop... Arriving, he looked cautiously through the window of the house which he had found. Inside was an old woman cooking meat on a battered stove – the smell was overpowering. Dantes knocked on the door. It opened, and the woman's wrinkled face appeared.

“What happened to you?” the woman asked, horrified. Her kindly face was covered in shock. “Please help me,” Dantes begged, “I'll explain everything.” “Come in,” the woman replied, eager to help. “And help yourself to some beef.” She grabbed a plate, piled it with food and handed it to Dantes, who ravenously picked at the steak on his plate. It was delicious. “Thank you very much,” Dantes smiled wearily. “Now as promised, I'll explain. I suppose it all started while I was watching TV with my dog at home. . .”

Dantes felt good. Earlier today he had patented his new invention and gave the story to a Times journalist. The invention he had made could create free energy using salt and water, and he was going to mass-produce it – using green methods, of course – and sell it. He was going to make millions, £20 at a time. The thought of it made his heart swell with pride. It was the only one of its kind, unique, and ingenious. Even he didn't completely understand how the hydraulic system worked. His machine was in many ways a work of art.

Suddenly he heard a noise outside his door. “Who's there?” he demanded, and no one answered. But the insistent bleeping at his door did. Dantes had just enough time to duck before the frag grenade blew the door off its hinges. Splinters and shards of wood sailed through the air over his head. Men all clad in black began to file into the room. Then with inhuman unison, they all drew their weapons. Some carried bats, some knives, some guns. Then they attacked, killing the dog first, then advancing on Dantes. The last thing Dantes heard was a dying whimper from his dog, and the last thing he felt was a heavy blow to the back of his head.

SACHA LIVINGSTON - YEAR 5

### The Future of our Constitution

When discussing the future of the UK's constitution it is important to have a complete and rounded understanding of the UK's constitutional history as well as the conditions in which constitutions are brought about. It is not entirely known, or appreciated, that the UK has in fact experimented with forms of codified constitutions. In the 17th century, during the civil war period, the UK got its first sovereign codified constitution: The Instrument of Government 1653. This was then succeeded by the Humble Petition and Advice in 1657 which became the UK's second and last codified constitution.

Although both these documents have detailed nuances, they are not the focus of this article. The more important question to be asking is 'Why did they come about when they did?' The simple answer is that 'Crises breed Constitutions.' We've seen this happen time and time again with the American Constitution coming out of civil war, the Norwegian Constitution deriving from the threat of becoming a part of Sweden, the Mexican Constitution being born out of the Mexican Revolution, and the list goes on...

Since the 17th century the UK has not had the demand for a constitution in the same way as these countries have. Instead, as constitutions began to proliferate, Britain decided it needed its own understanding of Constitution. We did this through constitutional history, with this subject being taught in schools and universities though

the 1950s and 60s. This gave people some sort of familiarity with what constitutional issues and presets were as a substitute for our own codified constitution.

Alarming however, since the 1960s not only have we seen the continued lack of a codified constitution, despite our governmental system becoming more complicated through issues such as devolution, but constitutional history has dropped out of the school curriculum. We have been reminded of the damaging nature of this combination by Covid-19, with the line between what is and isn't constitutionally acceptable becoming more and more blurred. This crisis has made clear that the plethora of paper and documents that Westminster, the courts and the judges have generated over the centuries needs to be turned into something resembling a constitution that is more transparent and up to date so we have something people can consult and understand. This clearly seems important for the UK but questions need to be asked; and perhaps the most important one is when shall we do it?

BEN LONGHURST - SIXTH

### A translation of L'Arbre bleu

by Yves Bonnefoy

*Passant,  
Regarde ce grand arbre  
et a travers lui  
il peut suffire.*

*Car même déchiré, souillé,  
l'arbre des rues,  
c'est toute la nature,  
tout le ciel,  
l'oiseau s'y pose,  
le vent y bouge,  
le soleil y dit le même espoir malgré  
la mort.*

*Philosophe,  
ascrit chance d'avoir lathre  
dans ta rue,  
tes pensées seront moins ardues,  
tes yeux plus libres,  
tes mains plus désireuses  
de moins de nuit.*

JEREMY JEFFES - LOWER REMOVE

*Passer by  
See the grand tree  
and with it  
You will suffice.  
Because the same torn, squalid,  
tree of the streets,  
It is all of nature  
All the sky  
A bird, there it flies,  
The wind moves, and,  
the sun our hope, despite,  
our fear of endless death.  
Philosopher,  
Are you worthy, to have this tree  
On your street?  
You think you'll have less a  
hardship  
Your eyes more free  
Your hands  
greedier,  
Even less  
than at night.*



UCS IN THE SNOW - A PAINTING BY TALIAH SPENCER-JACOBS (TRANSITUS)

# Inspection Success

EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR, WE WERE DELIGHTED TO RECEIVE THE NEWS THAT ISI HAD REPORTED THE QUALITY OF OUR EDUCATION AS BEING CONSISTENTLY EXCELLENT ACROSS ALL THREE SCHOOLS- AND FULLY COMPLIANT!



**Excellent, Excellent, Excellent!** All three schools in the Foundation received ‘the call’ from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) on a frosty November morning. This signalled the beginning of a thorough, week-long Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection. Long-prepared for, this gave all in the UCS Community the chance to put our best foot forward and show the team of inspectors what makes a UCS education so distinct and impressive. Early in the new year, we were delighted to receive the news that ISI had reported the quality of our education as being consistently excellent across all three schools – and fully compliant!

This is the highest descriptor awarded and the educational quality is measured in terms of both pupil achievement and personal development.

The team of inspectors, made up from current and retired Heads, Deputy Heads and Senior Leaders, conducted a number of staff and pupil interviews as well as lesson, tutor time and assembly observations. They also examined a wealth of policies, evidence and pupil work to arrive at their judgement. Everyone at UCS is incredibly proud of the outcome and grateful to all staff for committing the necessary care, skill and dedication to educating our young people so successfully.

What brought particular joy was to see the confident way in which UCS pupils of all ages communicated and shared their experiences of a UCS education.

The inspection report commented on pupils’ excellent communication skills, well-developed social awareness and positive approach to work and other activities in school. Pastorally, inspectors noted the strong sense of moral character and passion for defending what they believe as right among the pupil body.

The outstanding provision academically was also praised by inspectors who cited the impressive examination results at GCSE and A Level as well as our pupils’ ambition and personal responsibility for their learning. They remarked that the independence and initiative that characterise our

**EVERYONE AT UCS IS INCREDIBLY PROUD OF THE OUTCOME AND GRATEFUL TO ALL STAFF FOR COMMITTING THE NECESSARY CARE, SKILL AND DEDICATION TO EDUCATING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SO SUCCESSFULLY.**

students’ approach to lessons and enrichment often suggest engagement on an undergraduate level.

“We were absolutely thrilled that all the schools were graded EXCELLENT in both sections – pupil achievement and personal development – making this a first for the Foundation,” said Headmaster, Mr Beard. “These results represent the sustained efforts and determination of colleagues over a period of years and we are grateful.”

Stephen Warshaw, Chair of UCS’s Governing Council, added: “By any measure, this is an outstanding result.



*Contributions from*  
**M. BEARD**  
**S. WARSHAW**

# Fundraising Across the Foundation

*With an almost full return to fundraising free from Covid frustrations, UCS fundraising flourished this year in all three schools with a variety of characteristically fun and imaginative events. Here is a report from each of the schools on their endeavours to raise money for charities close to them.*

## Senior School

Fundraising endeavours coalesced during the second half of the Autumn Term with the annual Community Action jamboree. With Covid regulations still partly lingering, pupils had to get creative in organising events and initiatives with maximum fundraising potential. These activities included a five-a-side football tournament, the brilliantly-supported Olders 5km Run In The Dark and an inaugural Bin It to Win It event where teachers raced against each other to sort recycling from rubbish – from within the discomfort of large bins! In total, Community Action 2021 raised a remarkable £25,440. The charities benefiting from this frenzy of action had been nominated by pupils from Entry, Shell, every Deme and the Sixth Form, with pupils then tasked with educating their peers about the work of their



respective charities during November and December. Community Action also aids our long-term friends at Equatorial College School in Uganda.

Later, and in response to the invasion of Ukraine, a Humanitarian Crisis Fundraising Committee was established, comprising pupils in every year group who coordinated fundraising efforts as well as an awareness campaign about the Ukraine War and the global refugee crisis. This committee chose to support The British Red Cross (Lower School), UNHCR (Middle School) and UNICEF and UN Women (Sixth Form), and its work was set to continue moving forward. This group raised over £5,000 in a very short period of time and will continue to ambitiously raise awareness and funds for people affected by humanitarian disasters in the new academic year. On top of these fundraising campaigns, the AKO Centre initiated a partnership with the Children's Book Project, staging regular book drives to help children throughout the UK who have limited access to books.

No year in fundraising report would be complete without due mention of the now perennial collection of food, toiletries, baby and sanitary products for our local charity North Paddington Foodbank. Tradition says that these collections should be run by Sixth Form students who encourage children across the school to donate generously. In 2021–22 we had two such collections: first, the customary autumn offering took place in October, being promoted and led by Year 12 pupils Dylan Ireland and Xavi Mesquita. The pair built boxes, packed the van and oversaw a veritable procession to the playground on the morning of the main event. The second collection in March was an appeal for donations to the charity's new Baby Bank.

In addition, the Senior School and Junior Branch continued their work with Bloomsbury Football Foundation. November saw the launch of its ReBoot scheme in which pupils donated over 500 pairs of football boots and trainers they had outgrown. Via its network of schools, community groups and local councils, Bloomsbury distributed these donated items to young people across London who would struggle to afford new pairs.

**“VOLUNTEERING OVER THE LOCKDOWN SHOWED ME FIRST-HAND THE MASSIVE IMPACT THAT SMALL ACTS OF GENEROSITY AND KINDNESS CAN HAVE ON PEOPLE IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES. SPEAKING TO PEOPLE WHO USED MY LOCAL FOODBANK CHANGED MY PERSPECTIVE ON THE DAY-TO-DAY REALITY THAT MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FACE. DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES LIKE THESE, DONATING EVEN A LITTLE CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY FOOD POVERTY.”**

XAVI MESQUITA  
Transitus

Junior Branch

It was wonderful to return to an almost complete programme of charity events this year – and hopefully full normality will be restored in 2022–23 with the resumption of visits to the local Age UK centre in Hampstead. As always we thank our parents for their generosity and practical support. Such a range of activities would not be possible without their assistance – Community Action being the clearest example. Thanks also to our boys for their unrelenting passion and enthusiasm for fundraising and community projects, and to staff members for their invaluable logistical help. In total, the JB boys raised £9,146.75 – a significant sum – so they should be proud of their efforts. This money will have a positive impact on many disadvantaged people’s lives including those affected by war in Ukraine.

Charity events and money raised 2021–22

£535.40	for Jeans for Genes via Wear Jeans to School Day
£272.60	for Save the Children via Christmas Jumper Day
£547.70	for Team Seas via Ocean Day mufti
£4,300.75	for Children’s Homes in Kerala State via Readathon
£752.40	for Comic Relief via Red Nose Day
£1,699.40	for WithUkraine via Years 5 and 6 Community Action
£1,038.50	for WithUkraine via Years 3 and 4 Community Action



“A GINORMOUS THANK YOU TO EVERYONE AT UCS WHO ORGANISED THIS WONDERFUL DRIVE AND THOSE WHO WERE ABLE TO DONATE. WE WERE OVERWHELMED BY YOUR GENEROSITY, THE BOXES JUST KEPT PILING UP! THE QUANTITY OF PRODUCTS ALLOWED US TO GET UP AND RUNNING QUICKLY AND START MEETING THE DEMAND OF A RANGE OF FAMILIES AND WOMEN IN THE AREA.”

MADS MELLUISH  
Project and Volunteer Coordinator at  
North Paddington Foodbank

Pre-Prep

The Pre-Prep continued to show compassion and concern for other children less fortunate, both in the UK and worldwide. Charity days enabled pupils to understand some of the daily challenges facing other children. The Macmillan Coffee Morning showcased the culinary skills of Year 2, whose oat biscuits and smoothies were enjoyed by pupils, parents and siblings alike. Jeans for Genes Day raised funds for the Gene People charity that supports children with genetic disorders. A sponsored Maths quiz and Buddy the cuddly speech bubble were highlights of the NSPCC visit to promote its ‘Speak out Stay safe’ campaign. And then the marvels of Red Nose Day: our swimathon in which the boys worked in House teams to swim a combined 20.9km; Funny Friday where Houses competed to produce the best joke, including delivery and timing; and that annual staple of UCS Has Got Talent with its dancing, magic tricks and mime, football skills and breakdancing.

Charity events and money raised 2021–22

£489	for Macmillan Cancer Support via World’s Biggest Coffee Morning
£141	for Gene People via Jeans for Genes Day
£953.50	for NSPCC ‘Speak out Stay safe’ via sponsored Maths Quiz
£2,000+	for Red Nose Day via Swimathon, Funny Friday & UCS Has Got Talent

Contributions from

- J. LEWIS
- S. BENNETT
- A. TYSON
- N. WATT



“WE ARE DELIGHTED THAT UCS SUPPORTED BLOOMSBURY FOOTBALL FOUNDATION’S REBOOT SCHEME. WE AIM TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN LONDON USING THE POWER OF FOOTBALL AND ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR FAMILY’S ABILITY TO PAY. WE RECOGNISE THAT THE COST OF BOOTS IS A BARRIER TO PARTICIPATION. REBOOT AIMS TO TACKLE THIS BY COLLECTING BOOTS AND TRAINERS THAT CHILDREN NO LONGER NEED AND GETTING THEM ON NEW FEET. THE 500+ PAIRS DONATED BY UCS PUPILS WILL PROVIDE HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN IN THE LOCAL AREA WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN OUR REGULAR FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES WHO MAY OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN PRECLUDED FROM PARTICIPATING.”

CHARLIE HYMAN  
CEO and Founder of Bloomsbury  
Football Foundation

# Volunteering

*We were delighted to continue working alongside our partners in the local community and beyond during 2021–22, with significant amounts of time and energy committed by our pupils and so much gained by them too.*



As part of the Partnership and Volunteering Programme, all Year 12 and 13 students were placed in a variety of volunteering roles, ranging from sports coaching to volunteering in charity shops and primary schools. These placements, which always took place on a Friday, provided rewarding and enriching experiences.

As with their Sixth Form counterparts, so too our Lower Remove pupils achieved positive impacts by participating in weekly Maths mentoring sessions with Year 5 children from Richard Cobden Primary School, one of the number of local primaries with which UCS maintains a close collaborative relationship. This mentoring initiative was carried out via Zoom and, during the Summer Term, it was extended to English with more boys taking up the chance to offer online support to mentees. In the process they also developed important interpersonal skills.

It was those at the older end of the age spectrum who were the beneficiaries of our collaboration with the

Cards of Care organisation. UCS pupils designed and created hundreds of Christmas cards with personalised messages for older members of the local community who might have been at risk of social isolation. Also during the latter part of the Autumn Term, pupils from both the Senior School and the Junior Branch gave, not their time, but over 500 pairs of football boots and trainers in a mass donation to the Bloomsbury Football Foundation.

Transitus pupils, meanwhile, had the opportunity to volunteer their time as well as build their confidence and leadership skills by assisting at the academic sessions of the UCS Summer School in July. The volunteers worked with Year 4 pupils from local primary schools on a variety of exciting challenges and topics including designing, building, decorating and, finally, flying kites.

Pupils in the Junior Branch also headed out into the community ready to make a positive and productive impact aligned with our goals around sustainability.

**“THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ONCE AGAIN SUPPORTING CARDS OF CARE. WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO UCS FOR ALWAYS BEING ONE OF THE FIRST SCHOOLS TO JUMP INTO ACTION AND SHOWER THE RESIDENTS IN CARE WITH LIGHT AND LOVE TO BRIGHTEN THEIR WORLD!”**

NICCI MENASHE  
Founder of Cards of Care

*Contributions from*  
**C. RANCON**  
**M. REIDERMAN**



**“FOR THE PAST FEW WEEKS I HAVE BEEN VOLUNTEERING AT ALL ABOARD GOLDERS GREEN. I HAVE HELPED WITH SORTING THROUGH DONATIONS AND ORGANISING THOSE THAT ARE FIT FOR SALE. I HAVE ALSO DONE STEAMING FOR SMARTER CLOTHING AND OPERATED THE TILL WHEN NECESSARY. I HAVE ALSO HELPED WITH TAGGING CLOTHES AND ORGANISING THE STORE.”**

MOHAMMED ALSABTY  
Transitus

# The Parents' Guild

*We remain grateful to be supported by Parents' Guilds at all three schools. Their tireless efforts in organising events for pupils and parents provide a fun filled calendar of opportunities for connections and support networks to be built within our community.*



No sooner had UCS parents heaved a collective sigh of relief at business as usual than the Foundation's respective Parents' Guilds were preparing calendars of events.

A key event in those calendars was the stunning fireworks display held at the New Pavillion and fields in the Autumn Term. The tickets sold out in the blink of an eye and the evening proved a festive and warming moment to catch up as well as a spectacular display.

At the Junior Branch, the Parents' Guild's chosen charity was Camden-based Doorstep London – aka Doorstep Homeless Families Project – which assists families in temporary accommodation with emotional and practical support. The Guild raised £11,000 for this cause.

Normal service resumed with the Macmillan Coffee Morning, as parents dropped in and boys snapped up treats and toys, mustering £1,228 for Macmillan Cancer Support. And though the Winter Fair and appearance of the JB Santa were thwarted by Covid, Santa still gave out grotto gifts and hampers were raffled, constituting a virtual triumph.

Meantime, the Pre-Prep's School Quiz Night, held in late September, marked its first Parents' Guild event in more than 18 months. This wonderful occasion not only tested the knowledge and memory of attendees, but generated £2,000 for local young people's charity, the Winch.

#### *Contributions from*

M. LITTNER	N. KARDOS
C. BOGARD	A. RICCOBONO
N. WATT	P. MORRIS
L. AVIGDORI	T. LEVENFICHE
H. OFFENBACH	

Then came spring and an event that filled the JB with hearty laughter and healthy competition. The JB Supper Quiz was a hugely entertaining evening, with Mr Walliker restored as quizmaster extraordinaire. The Year 6 Leavers' Tea also returned, and it was even more special to see the boys show their grandparents and other family members around school.

The Guild also contributed financially to the new wellbeing area at Holly Hill, having raised money through outgrown uniform and UCS-branded goods sales. Class reps worked tirelessly to make all these activities a success and help generate such significant funds as well as community spirit.

It was a similar story at the Senior School, where the traditional Supper Quiz made a comeback after a pandemic-induced hiatus. March's evening of brain-teasing, wining, dining and general knowledge fun not only brought "fullness of life back to the Great Hall", according to Headmaster Mr Beard, but supported the charity Goods for Good in offering humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian people.

A coffee morning for Macmillan Cancer Support also had FrognaL abuzz as parents and pupils popped by for coffee and cake, in addition to a uniform sale. This event raised £2,000 for Macmillan. Further cause for gratitude came after the Guild collected for Food Bank Aid on the playground in June. Kindness really is more than a catchword at UCS.

# The UCS Summer School

*This summer saw the much anticipated return of the UCS Summer School. The spectacular event was extended from its usual format, ushering in a jam-packed week of activities for Year 4 and 5 children from local primary schools.*



The week was attended by 130 children and split into two academic days for Year 4 pupils hosted at Frogmal and two days of sporting endeavour for Year 5 pupils at the New Pavilion and Playing Fields; the latter arranged in collaboration with Active Day Camps.

In the academic sessions, UCS teachers planned activities to stretch bright Year 4 pupils and expose them to topics that they were unlikely to have yet experienced. For example, Mr Franks led a session on designing, building, decorating and flying kites which everyone loved getting involved in. Dr Bugler's interactive Science session in one of the Chemistry labs gave pupils a chance to see how Bunsen burners work and how experiments can lead to different chemical reactions. Similarly interactive was Dr Quirke's session on electronics and Engineering in which the children got to try their hands at building working circuits. The sessions also included introductions to Modern Languages and subjects like Psychology, Politics and Computer Science. These sessions were brilliantly supported too by UCS Transitus students who helped the primary school children access the materials and tasks with patience and care, building their confidence and leadership skills at the same time.

At the Playing Fields, the team of Active Day Camps coaches put on a fabulous array of sporting sessions for the Year 5 attendees. They were taught the basic skills and concepts of rugby, tennis, rounders and football and enjoyed a Nerf session on the final afternoon. The sun shone as all the pupils threw themselves into meeting new people, trying new sports and developing their communication and teamwork skills.

Contributions from  
C. RANCON

# The Lund Gallery

*The visibility and importance of the Senior School's gallery space, The Lund Gallery, grew exponentially this year. Throughout the year, pupils and the wider community were treated to a wide range of shows all characterised by their interactivity, inclusivity and professionalism.*



Contributions from  
V. TRINDER

In the Autumn Term, Jenny Blake's stunning paintings of the local Hampstead swimming ponds struck a chord with our local community as many pupils, parents and staff use these regularly. Jenny also ran a life drawing session for Sixth Form artists as part of the show which took place in the gallery space among her paintings. Following this show, the gallery welcomed back Old Gowers from the 2020 and 2021 leavers cohorts who had been unable to exhibit their A Level pieces due to Covid restrictions. This wonderful opportunity to return to Frogmal, connect with each other and the current Sixth as well as discuss Art and the future was very welcomed by all who attended and exhibited.

Another important show in the Lund Gallery's calendar was The Consent Show. Pupils in the Transitus produced pieces on the topic of consent; these spanned ceramics styled as Love Hearts, tote bags and t-shirts and a 'Consent Tent'. Pupils were invited to use the space to hold structured discussions about this important topic. We Shall Overcome was held to celebrate International Women's Day. This was a collaborative project involving Art and Politics students in the Transitus. It was planned to provide opportunities for non-Art students to hone their research skills as well as to build their confidence in communicating ideas in a creative and visual way. The exhibition took the form of a peaceful protest. There was also a series of performances throughout in which pupils recited speeches and poetry by notable women.

The Lund Gallery also served as a project and exhibition space for Art exam groups. Having pupils work on their portfolios in this open space encouraged younger pupils to ask questions about Art higher up the school and discuss the older students' work with them.

# Welcome to the Common Room

*This year, all three schools welcomed new colleagues, teaching and support, to the Common Room of UCS. We are delighted they are joining us following competitive recruitment processes and look forward to working with them over the coming years.*

## Pre-Prep

**Philippa McIntosh** joined the Pre-Prep in September 2021 as one of our Reception teachers. Philippa was returning from a spell of teaching abroad having been part of Early Years teams in both Thailand and Hong Kong.

## Junior Branch

**Joe Jones** joined the JB in January 2022 as a Year 4 (and now Year 5) form teacher and teacher of English, Maths and Humanities. A graduate from Durham University in Theology and Philosophy, Joe also taught previously at St Anthony's, Hampstead.

**Laurence Danvers** joined the JB in April 2022, working as maternity cover Head of Science. Laurence has a BA (Spanish and Linguistics) from the University of East London and has a wide range of teaching experience in London primary schools in addition to a passion for teaching samba and coaching rugby.

**Faria Griffiths** started as a Year 4 form teacher in September 2022, teaching Maths and English in addition to a passion for Drama. Faria has previously worked in schools in Thailand and is a graduate of the Open University and Suffolk University.

**Yi Li** joined full time in September 2022 as a full-time SEND teaching assistant. Yi has just completed an MA from UCL in Special and Inclusive Education and has previous experience working in several schools in China.

**Maria Matip Asesnio** joined the JB in September 2022 as a maternity replacement MFL teacher. Maria is a graduate of the University of Alicante in addition to holding a PGCE from Roehampton Institute with good previous experience working in London schools.

## Senior School

**Lucy Aitchison** joins the English Department. She has a BA in Modern and Medieval Languages from Cambridge University. After working in the financial services sector Lucy retrained as a teacher, and joins us from John Lyon School, where she was a Head of Year.

**Elle Barten** joins our Art Department. Elle has a BA in Fine Art from the University of Creative Arts and comes to us from her PGCE course. During her PGCE Elle completed placements at a specialist school and a selective state school, both in Kent.

**Joanna Collier** completes our Learning Support team. She has a BEd in Primary Education from the University of Leeds, and a number of postgraduate qualifications in SEN and psychometric testing and assessment. Joanna joins us from Haberdashers' Girls' School where she was Assistant Head of Individual Needs.

**Sergio Cuartero Simarro** is a SCITT trainee Teacher of Spanish and French and undertakes his first placement as part of his training programme with us. Previously, Sergio was a Foreign Language Assistant at Haberdashers' Boys' School. Stephanie Hess will be his mentor in our Modern Foreign Languages Department.

**Michael Edwards** joins our Chemistry Department. He has an MSci in Chemistry from Imperial College London, where he specialised in Industrial Chemistry and sustainability. Michael was also very active in volunteering and outreach projects. He joins us from Hampstead School.

**Joshua Eilon** joins our Maths Department. He has a BSc in Mathematics, Operational Research, Statistics & Economics from the University of Warwick. In between further studies for his PGCE Joshua spent time travelling the world and tutoring students in Maths. Joshua is an Old Gower and joins us from the Archer Academy.

**Maud Fournier-Bidoz** joins our Modern Languages Department as a French Language Assistant. Maud's undergraduate degree was in International Relations and she subsequently completed a Master's degree in English Education. Maud has spent her career to this point working in schools in France.

**Amanda Herrmann** joins our Modern Languages Department. She has an MA in French and Spanish from the University of Edinburgh. Following a career in classical singing, Amanda completed her PGCE at the Institute of Education, and she joins us from Highgate Wood School.

**Adwoa Nketia** joins our Design and Technology Department. She has a BA Art in Graphic Design & Communication from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. Adwoa has taught both Art and DT in the UK, as well as in schools in Ghana and Malaysia.

**Ketevan Nizharadze** joins our Chemistry Department. She has a BSc in Biomedicine with Data Sciences from the University of Surrey and joins us from her PGCE course at Cambridge. Previously, Ketevan held research assistant roles in Germany and Russia, and also taught Chemistry at the British International School of Tbilisi in Georgia.

**Xavier Pollock** joins our Classics Department. He has a BA in Ancient History and an MA in Classics from University College London, and an MPhil in Classics from Cambridge. Xavier joins us from Rugby School, where he was a resident tutor in a boarding house alongside teaching Classics.

**George Purves** joins our English Department. He has a BA in English from the University of Exeter and as part of his degree studied for a year at Vassar College, New York. George also has an MA in Film and Television Production from the University of Bristol. Before going into teaching, George was the co-founder and director of his own media company. He joins us from Monkton Senior School.

**Courtney Sklar** also joins the English Department. She has a BA in English and French from the University of Leeds and also studied French Language and Literature at the Sorbonne. Away from teaching, Courtney is undertaking a creative writing programme with the Faber Academy. She joins us from Ecole Jeannine Manuel School where she was Assistant Head, responsible for Years 7 and 8.

**Chloe Thorn** joins our Drama Department. Chloe has a BA in Drama, Applied Theatre & Education from the Royal School of Speech & Drama, and did her PGCE at Goldsmiths. Aside from teaching, Chloe remains active in script writing and performance. She joins us from Heston Community College.

**Richard Wood** joins the Physics Department. He has an MPhys from the University of Swansea and did his PGCE at Canterbury Christ Church University. Richard joins us from Claremont High School where, alongside his teaching role, he was Digital Learning Leader.

Additionally, **Will Jones** moves from the Junior Branch, where he has taught since 2012, to the Senior School to join the PE Department.

## Support Staff

**Rahma Ahmed** was already part of our Science Technician team, but Rahma now joins us on a permanent basis, working in the Biology Department.

**Conal Bembridge-Sayers** is our new Head of Singing. He has a BMus in Piano and Voice and a PGDip in Collaborative Piano and Repetiteur Studies from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Conal continues to perform as a freelance musician, and he is also a lay clerk at Cardiff's Metropolitan Cathedral.

**Miriam Farcas** is our new Art Technician. She has a BA in History of Art from Regensburg in Germany and a BA in Illustration from the University of Arts in London.

**Lee Morgan** joined us earlier in the summer as our new Head of Grounds. He has qualifications from the Grounds Management Association and completed an apprenticeship in horticulture at Otley College. As well as working in schools, he has also worked at Wembley Stadium. He comes to us from Arnold House School.

**Kate Mills** is joining us as one of our School Counsellors. Kate has an MA in English from the University of Cambridge, a BA in Professional Acting from LAMDA and an MSc in Psychoanalytics of Human Development from Birkbeck College. Kate has extensive experience from her work in the NHS as a child and adolescent psychotherapist.

# Common Room Goodbyes

*We wish all of this year's Common Room Leavers the very best in whatever future endeavours lie beyond UCS for them.*

**Chris Bhantoa** joined UCS in 2014 and was Director of Drama from 2020–22. His classroom dynamism was highly popular with pupils, and he contributed significantly to the growth of his department. Chris also directed excellent productions such as *Guys and Dolls*, *Decade* and *Enron* while overseeing and implementing exciting school excursions like UCS Drama's New York trip. During the pandemic, he entertained colleagues and pupils with his virtual pub quiz. Chris will be missed by pupils as an energetic, funny and engaging teacher. We wish him the very best in his new post at St Albans.

*C. Abbott*

**Kell Blyth** is a simply stellar Maths teacher, liked by all of his students, and who took on the role of Head of Department for one year of his long UCS career. Beyond the classroom, Kell also did a brilliant job in coaching the UCS Fives teams. He certainly had the fitness to do so, having cycled to and from UCS every day for the last nine years, rain or shine!

*D. Armitage*

**Maria Bousiopoulou** joined UCS in September 2020, and in the two years that she spent at the school, she made a huge impact on the support for both pupils and teachers. During her time at UCS Maria contributed her expertise to numerous SEND Seminars and Learning Support Representatives meetings. She will be sorely missed by us all.

*P. Milton*

**Zoe Cannell**, despite only being at UCS for a year, will be sorely missed by the Classics Department. Her work coordinating the teaching of Key Stage 5, especially supporting our Oxbridge candidates, was stellar and always had the pupils' best interest and progress at its heart. Zoe's energy and enthusiasm in co-organising the popular Classics Society was also hugely appreciated and enabled pupils to be enriched in the subject beyond the classroom. We wish Zoe all the best for her new teaching role at Channing School.

*A. McAra*

**Emma Dell** joined our Chemistry Department in September 2019 and leaves us to join St Paul's Girls' School as Head of Chemistry. Emma is an amazingly talented and effective teacher, and many students have enjoyed lessons delivered by her. Emma also spent a significant amount of her time on whole school teaching and learning; she made impressive and significant contributions to the teaching and learning research that UCS produces (some of this has now been published) as Head of Research, and in her final year at UCS she was one of three Directors of Teaching and Learning.

*S. Hoyle*

**Emma Desmond** packed a great deal of work, enthusiasm and impact into her time in the UCS Classics Department. Her boundless energy and willingness to work with pupils and colleagues will make her an asset to the department she now leads at St Margaret's School. Emma will be especially missed for her work in debating, Model UN, enrichment and volunteering to lead the Minimus Project at New End Primary School.

*A. McAra*

**Amy Holland** is a huge loss to our Physics Department. Amy has moved to become Head of Year 12 at Magdalen College. She was an extremely valued staff member, not only of the Physics Department, but also with her work in enrichment and partnerships. Lessons with Amy were always engaging, and pupils achieved excellent results under her stewardship. She will be missed by staff and students alike.

*P. Edmunds*

**Anne Isaac**... where to start? Well, how about back in 1991 when she arrived at Frogna. Over the ensuing three decades of service Anne taught outstanding English lessons. She was recognised for her deep subject knowledge, particularly the novels of Jane Austen. Anne was also an exemplary Deme Warden of Underwoods from January 2016. Last summer her long and distinguished UCS career ended; it will not be forgotten.

*H. Hardingham*

**James McFarland** joined the Pre-Prep ten years ago as a Teaching Assistant and has since worked across both the EYFS and Key Stage One. We said a fond farewell to him at the end of the academic year and wish him all the best as he embarks upon his PGCE at the Institute of Education.

*S. Ryan*

**Laura McGill**, who leaves UCS to live in Switzerland with her family, joined the school back in the spring of 2011 as an NQT. She contributed hugely to the English Department with her fun and engaging lessons as well as her support for departmental initiatives including Creative Writing Club and theatre trips. Her encyclopaedic recall of pupils' needs and interests is hard to replace!

*H. Hardingham*

**Patrick Ormrod** left UCS this year to become Head of Design & Technology at Claremont School to be closer to his family on the south coast. A much valued Lower School Form Tutor and Design and Technology teacher, Patrick will be missed by his colleagues and classes and we wish him all the very best with his new role.

*H. Franks*

**Kevin Reilly**, for more than 35 years, played an integral role in the lives of thousands of UCS pupils without them perhaps ever realising. His unstinting dedication to the playing fields at Ranulf Road was simply remarkable and I know I speak for all the staff and pupils who knew him well and who benefited from his expertise, when I pay tribute to everything that he achieved over those years. The quality of the playing surfaces for all major sports has been superb and in recent years, he oversaw a dramatic transformation in our facilities – a task he took on with typical good humour and commitment. It is hard to imagine not seeing Kevin with his great mate Bill on a weekly basis, but I

hope he realises just how much we will miss him. Perhaps typically, Kevin has retired to a property near a cricket club, where he may well offer his time and talents in due course. We wish him every happiness close to his family and to his beloved Liverpool FC, and we say goodbye to an utterly decent man who was a great servant to UCS.

*A. Wilkes*

**Ian Thomas** joined UCS in 2014 as a Teacher of PE & Games and Head of Tennis. His wealth of experience in rugby from Bath Rugby Club led to him taking on the role of Head of Rugby in 2017. In this position he managed back to back wins in the U18 Middlesex Cup; a first for UCS. He also led various tours to Italy and Australia. He became one of the leading teachers in the PE Department and Bristol Grammar now has an excellent and experienced teacher in Ian. We wish him every success.

*E. Sawtell*

**Sophie Tobert** was a valued member of the Modern Languages Department teaching French and Spanish, latterly as Head of French. Sophie was a stalwart of trips and enrichment, organising the Transitus Debating and regular trips to Antibes. Sophie has moved to St. Albans High School for Girls to take on the role of Head of French there and we all wish her the very best of luck.

*H. Laurenson*

**Amy Waterhouse** is leaving the JB after eight years and will be greatly missed. Amy has been a form teacher in Years 3 and 5, Head of PSHEE and Wellbeing, and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and has approached each role with the utmost dedication and professionalism. She was responsible for creating an entirely new PSHEE curriculum as well as the introduction of Wellbeing at the JB, helping each pupil develop their self-understanding and encouraging a greater awareness of good mental health. Amy has also been integral in the implementation of many school-wide initiatives, such as Learning Characters and the travel scheme, designing badges and making these an exciting addition to school life for the boys. Amy has been on maternity leave this year and will be returning to teaching in a part time position at St Paul's Cathedral School. Her departure is a huge loss to the JB and she will be greatly missed by the entire UCS community.

*J. Przygoda*

**Hannah Wiedermann** was an enthusiastic and valued member of the Modern Languages Department, arriving from NLCS and taking up the role of Head of French. Hannah organised many French enrichment initiatives, including the French Breakfast, trips to France and ably assisted in the Primary School Liaison workshops every Summer Term. Hannah moves to Clifton College as a teacher of French and Spanish and we wish her all the very best.

*H. Laurenson*



“Alone we can  
do so little.  
Together we  
can do so  
much.”

# The Return of Trips

*School trips are an inherent part of UCS life. Until Covid, our co-curricular tent accommodated all manner of them. Now relieved of restrictions, that same canopy was shaken down and stretched over multiple locations – from Devon and Somerset to Norfolk and Essex, via Wales and the Lake District.*



How our pupils enjoyed the experience. It began with January's Classics trip to Bath, prefacing further visits for Classicists to the Science Museum's 'Ancient Greeks: Science and Wisdom' expedition and UCL's production of Euripides's *Electra*.

Art History students toured the National Gallery while Modern Foreign Languages' get-up-and-go took in the Institut Français, BFI, Science Museum, Goethe-Institut, pizza making as well as galleries, film and theatre.

Drama resumed West End trips, leaving *Transitus* and *Sixth* blown away by *Hamilton*, *Remove* thrilled by *Life of Pi*, and *Entry and Shell* awe-struck by *Frozen's* spectacular staging.

Politics students trod the hallowed ground of the Houses of Parliament, including the Royal Gallery and *New Dawn* display outside St Stephen's Hall. Geographers went further afield, the first *Transitus* residential since 2019 held at *Blencathra* near Keswick.

Sustainability, Computer Science, Green Impact and Coding Club boxes were ticked when UCS's Community Air Pollution Sensors team attended Google HQ, while the equally alluring Samsung HQ hosted a UCS contingent for *Sustainers Fest*. UCS and LAE Stratford pupils participated in a Canary Wharf in Focus photography competition.

The only way was Essex for Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions and a Shell Bushcraft Trip; however, other trails were blazed during Activities Week, notably the *Entry* residential in North Devon. Closer to home, UCS pupils visited the Imperial War Museum, London Aquarium,

“LIVING IN LONDON, AND FREQUENTLY SEEING BIG BEN AND THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT IN PERSON OR IN IMAGES, THESE SIGNIFICANT PLACES BECOME MORE MUNDANE THAN THEY SHOULD BE - PERHAPS MORE ASSOCIATED WITH TOURISM THAN POLITICS. HOWEVER, OUR TRIP TO PARLIAMENT RESTORED THE WONDER THAT COMES WITH SEEING WHERE IMPORTANT DECISIONS ARE MADE IN OUR COUNTRY, SOME OF WHICH SET THE SCENE FOR THE POLITICS WE STUDY AT SCHOOL.”

MINNAT MOHAMMED  
Transitus



Olympic Park, Old Bailey, Royal Courts of Justice, Tower of London, Kew Gardens and much else.

The Entry's trip to North Devon took them to Skern Lodge, an activity centre in Appledore, where they affirmed friendships made that year and tried their hand at a range of activities. These included: abseiling, high ropes, rafting, rock climbing, assault course, surfing, archery and tunnels. Mr Roberts, Head of Lower School, led the trip and explained its importance, saying: "One of the impressive things about this residential is how the boys support each other in the activities. Abseiling and high ropes are not necessarily everyone's cup of tea. But the support shown within each group enabled everyone to attempt the activities and endeavour to conquer their fears."

Junior Branch pupils also scratched itchy feet. September 2021 witnessed a four-day expedition to Kingswood outdoor activity centre in North Norfolk – exotically featuring a baby shark. A second Kingswood trip followed in May, to North Wales, with similar adventure, fun and exhilaration. Year 6 also had a 'Journey to the Centre of the Cell' at Queen Mary, University of London – specifically, a microscopic world of cells, natural selection, chromosomes, DNA, etc. The Year 5s spent a day at the BFI where Spanish-language films fortified their talent and taste for language learning, while Year 4 consolidated work on living things and habitats by pond dipping at Barnet Environment Centre.



“THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS TRIP WAS SKINNING AND PREPARING A FRESH RABBIT FOR DINNER, A GORY YET IMPORTANT ACTIVITY IN TERMS OF NOT ONLY SURVIVAL SKILLS BUT ALSO EDUCATION - LEARNING ABOUT THE JOURNEY MEAT GOES THROUGH BEFORE LANDING ON OUR PLATES. IT DEEPENED MY RESPECT AND GRATITUDE FOR ALL THE MEAT I HAVE READILY AVAILABLE.”

SOCHI UEDA  
Shell



The Pre-Prep relished a year packed with visits to London museums and education centres. An autumn stroll to Primrose Hill was Reception's moment to learn about the local environment as well as road safety. That segued into Road Safety Week, after which Year 1 travelled back in time first to the London Museum of Water and Steam for a Victorian washday, and much else besides, and then to a fabulous workshop on the Great Fire of London.

Year 2 got into costume for a History Off the Page: World War One Day, complete with trenches and rations. Their subsequent RAF Museum trip immersed them in World War One history and remembrance.

Reception learned about healthy eating and organic food at Waitrose, healthy teeth from a visiting dental nurse, and healthy diet in the company of a nutritionist. Year 2 discovered all things lava at an explosive volcano workshop at the National History Museum. Year 1's expedition to the 'Secret Garden' near Primrose Hill taught them how to plot, interpret and make maps. Reception also went on the nature trail at Camley Street Natural Park.

Year 1's visit to The Postal Museum involved a 'Jolly Postman' workshop and a climb aboard the unmissable 'Mail Rail'. Finally, Year 2 had a brilliant trip to the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre, entering the magical world of this prolific author.

Contributions from  
E. SZEKELY  
J. LEWIS

# UCS Sport

*For Old Gowers and current UCS pupils, Sport is a cornerstone of life at school. There's nothing quite like celebrating success on the pitch, court, track, water and beyond. And there was plenty to celebrate this year!*



At the top end of the Foundation, the 1st XI footballers took sporting plaudits by lifting the Middlesex Schools FA Tye Cup in March. A goal in the final ten minutes secured the team a 1-0 win against the London Oratory at Rectory Park, clinching the trophy and capping a remarkable campaign, including penalty shoot-out victories in both quarter-final and semi-final against St Ignatius College and Barnet and Southgate College respectively. Led by captain Sam Abrahams who described the cup run as “surely one of the most extraordinary UCS has ever been in”, the 22 players who contributed should be delighted with their victory.

The following month, the Under-19 table tennis team achieved third place in England at the Butterfly Schools Team Championships in Wolverhampton. UCS's 6-2 dismissal of Grantham College secured the bronze medal. Player Toby Crawcour said:

“We faced difficult competition but, with outstanding performances from everybody, we have achieved such a success for the third time in five years.”

The Under-15 cricketers secured a similar podium finish at the English Schools Cricket Association Finals at Dulwich College while the U12s won their Area Cup final. On the water, UCS's Year 11 rowers won two races at the London Borough of Hounslow Schools Spring Regatta. Such marvellous achievements left pupils and coaches alike feeling rightfully proud.

On the rugby pitch this season, our teams made excellent progress. Despite injuries, the 1st XV learned a great deal and were able to develop their communication and organisation while maintaining a strong mentality. Highlights of their season included a convincing first win against Queen Elizabeth's, Barnet, a nail-biter against Watford Grammar that UCS led till the last touch of the match and a comprehensive victory against Latymer Upper with impressive performances from Yugi Ishizuka-Wright and Shunta Goto. Regardless of the defeats, the UCS team will remember this season proudly, with many Transitus boys stepping up and assuming important roles led valiantly by captain Luca Joseph.

Our netball team continues to go from strength to strength as it is bolstered by talented new pupils every year. Training included a mix of match play and strength and conditioning sessions focusing on improving speed and agility as well as skill. This year the team played matches against a number of strong teams including South Hampstead, Mill Hill, Highgate and the teachers! The staff-student netball match is one of the highlights of the year.

“I AM PROUD OF MY TEAM AND THEY PLAYED INCREDIBLY WELL WITH SPIRIT, COLLABORATION AND HARD WORK. WE ALL MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE WHEN WE ARE TOGETHER. GREAT TOURNAMENT UCS!”

FALLON MILLER  
Year 4 Football Captain

Beyond the collective, there were eye-catching individual exploits that warrant a closer look. Shell pupil Harry Roberts starred at the Public Schools Fencing Championships, winning 28 of his 32 fights in epee, foil and sabre to be named best overall swordsman at the event and so lift the Master-at-Arms trophy.

Year 13 pupil Sam Ziff made his debut in hockey's national league with the Hampstead & Westminster club where several other UCS boys are also excelling. Max Griffiths and Oscar Sharland, from Years 10 and 11 meanwhile, were called up to an England Under-17 Hockey camp.

Other noteworthy debutants, this time for the 1st XI cricket team, were Remove boys Charlie Wheeler, Aryan Thaker, Aadhil Hameed and Aadi Jain. Under-15 athlete Thomas Chadwick represented UCS in an Under-16 event at Lee Valley AC and promptly smashed the 1500m meet

record, while Arun Ayaru was crowned Middlesex Gold Under-16 champion. No medals but an honourable mention for Tomoya Hartley's 12 tries from five matches with the Under-13A rugby side, including at least one per game.

UCS students continued to participate and make progress in cross country as well. The same Thomas Chadwick was one of three runners, along with Joseph Hayes and Ross Doran, that represented London at the English Schools Cross Country Championships. The Senior School's Running Club that departs Froggnal three mornings a week remains hugely popular too and a perfect way to start the day.

The school's ever expanding sporting provision, with a combined 37 teams in rugby and football alone, gained the addition of a girls' cricket team – whose competitive bow came against Mill Hill in June.

Girls cricket had figured as part of March's Women in Sport Week, which served up everything from synchronised swimming and water polo to dodgeball, acro yoga and dance, via netball and football; all capped off by a swimming gala. Meanwhile, UCS's in-house, innovative and super-quick version of cricket also captured the imagination, with Year 7 boys relishing their Super Smash cricket competition, while (Old Gowers, look away) the tennis first team claimed the scalp of the Old Boys.

The array of sporting opportunities for our pupils continues to expand and a team of cyclists from Froggnal made their debuts at Herne Hill's historic track this year. It is a crucial development for them to work on their skills of balance, awareness, safety



in the peloton, pushing hard on the straights and gunning for the banks. We look forward to watching this develop into next year!

The Junior Branch also posted notable results in the 2021–22 sporting arena. On the rugby field, the Year 3s and Year 6s performed superbly at their respective Gayhurst and Belmont festivals. The Year 3 team won three games out of four, including their final encounter with St John's. Proud captain, Charlie Avigdori, summed the day up by saying: "We played our best rugby with some great tries scored – we won the final match 10–5. We scored 33 tries over four games and everyone contributed to the scoring which shows great teamwork. It was a great morning and the watching parents all said how well we played and how happy they were that it didn't rain!" The Year 6 team also signed off with victory over St John's, after earning three wins, two draws and one defeat. In fact, the Year 6A team lasted the regular season unbeaten. The JB's footballers also caught the eye.

The Year 4As won their final, against Highgate, at their tournament last October, having notched three wins and a draw. The Year 5As then triumphed at March's Berkhamsted event where they enjoyed an identical run to their final, eventually prevailing against Caldicott. Ethan Cheng, who played in the final, recalled Mr Cook and Mr Churchill's advice on reaching the decider, saying: "We were all brimming with elation on getting to the final but, like Mr Cook and Mr Churchill said, 'Don't celebrate getting into the final, celebrate when you have won it!' But once again, our hero in this tournament, Sammy Kohansky, scored an outstanding goal to send us to first place!"

Another final was the one contested by one of the Year 6 hockey teams at the JB's own 'home' tournament here at the fields attended by a number of other local schools. Buoyed by two group wins and a draw, the valiant hosts edged North Bridge House on penalties in their semi, only to lose to a Merchant Taylors' golden goal in extra time. Mr Willis applauded all of the boys involved, describing the performance as "a valiant, determined and team effort". It looks like there is plenty of hockey success to come as Mr Edwards noted the convincing wins of all three Year 4 teams against Norfolk House – the first ever Year 4 fixture! – and the grit and determination shown by the Year 5 boys at the UCS tournament.

Contributions from  
**S. ABRAHAMS**  
**L. JOSEPH**  
**J. WILLIS**  
**R. GARBETT**  
**E. SAWTELL**

Sporting endeavour at the Pre-Prep began with the House Running competition. PE lessons leading up to the competition focused on pacing and the children were keen to practice, each hoping their House was going to triumph. Collectively, the children ran an impressive 101.1km. The start of the Spring Term saw the children arrive with their competitive nature and an eagerness to participate once more in the Sports Challenge Cup which culminated in a week of agility, balance and coordination challenges. The end of the Spring Term witnessed the highly anticipated Swimathon! Children eagerly entered the swimming pool with their House-coloured hats and a clear focus. They swam continuously for 10, 15 and 20 minutes (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 respectively) and collectively, they swam a staggering 20.9km, 6.1km more than last year!



# Sports Days

*The Summer Term can only mean one thing – Sports Day! For pupils right across the school, this highlight in the calendar was welcomed back post-Covid with the expected levels of enthusiasm and competitiveness!*



The Pre-Prep, Junior Branch and Senior School all hold Sports Days in the final weeks of term.

For pupils at the JB, Sports Day is always an occasion for great excitement and anticipation. It is a joy to get out of the classroom and have the whole school invade the Games field, all eager for the thrill of competing for their Houses in running, throwing and jumping. The weather was good too, which always helps. Concurrent with the athletics track and field events, there was an inter-house competition called the 'Super Smash'; our equivalent of Twenty20. Everyone was fully involved in the day's fun and physical exertions. Of course, there must be points and trophies to be won but these are never the main reason for enjoying Sports Day. As it happens, Eve House won this year but there should be serious competition from Campbell next year. We shall see!

For the Pre-Prep's big event, the 50m track was marked out at the Playing Fields and PE lessons were spent honing athletics skills. Come the big day, all pupils had their eyes on the Sports Day trophy while waving their new House flags. The event inspired both incredible performances and huge smiles, and when Dr Dunn revealed the winners it was congratulations to the blues of Griffin – and a special thank you to eight energetic volunteer helpers from the Senior School.

The Senior School's Sports Days are split into sectional affairs so that all of the pupils can get stuck in during Activities Week and earn House points for the Demes and Houses – all important considerations whenever we near the end of the year and the races to win the overall cups get close!



*Contributions from*

S. D. B. HALL  
R. GARBETT  
E. SAWTELL  
D. BROWN



The Transitus kicked things off on the Monday with a fantastic array of team games and athletics events and the success was quite evenly spread! Flocks emerged victorious in cricket, Baxters in tennis and Olders in volleyball. Black Hawkins took first place overall in the athletics but weren't able to beat Olders in the tug of war or Baxters in the 4x100m. These were mixed team events which was a UCS first! The Remove had a similarly busy day but Underwoods served up victory in tennis and Flocks in cricket. There was a tantalising tie for first place in the athletics overall between Evans and Olders. The Shell's Seacole house absolutely wiped the floor in their athletics events on the Thursday that week, winning overall as well as in the tug of war and 4x100m!

# Women in Sport Week

*‘Women in Sport Week’ at UCS is, in footballing terms, an open goal for any Sixth Form girl with any interest in or inquisitiveness about sport. Of course, sport is a crucial part of life at school with a stress always on inclusivity. However, for one week each year, we narrow the focus to prioritise sporting opportunities for girls.*



The 2021–22 ‘Women in Sport Week’ ran from 14th–18th March, as directed by Head of Netball, Mrs Hawes, together with Netball Coach Ms Tyson and Sixth pupil Sofia Jimenez Berruecos, making this a special collaboration between pupils and teachers. If the aim was to promote sport, exercise, and general activity and wellbeing, then it was particularly apposite in light of a study by UK charity Women in Sport which found that more than one million girls lose interest in sport as teenagers.

“We are deeply concerned by the number of girls who disengage from sport and exercise post primary school, with a further dip at age 17–18, once school sport is no longer compulsory,” said the report ‘Reframing Sport for Teenage Girls: Tackling Teenage Disengagement’. “Many of these girls enjoyed being active when younger but have needlessly fallen out of love with it.”

The wide-ranging programme had the breadth to pique the curiosity of the young women of Years 12 and 13. The week began with synchronised swimming, led by UK under-19 gold medallist and UCS Classics teacher Miss Desmond. This was followed by some wildly competitive water polo which was so successful that it provided the launchpad for a new UCS Water Polo Club to be established later in the year!

The competition continued into the Staff v Students netball match from which, despite superb performances by teachers (including some who had not played for some time!), the pupils emerged victorious. Lunchtime sessions included dodgeball and acro yoga as well as a cricket session which boded very well for the later

establishment of a girls cricket team! Two final activities were led by pupils: Anna Meade’s table tennis session provided the opportunity for girls to try something new, as she had done when she couldn’t play normal tennis in lockdown; and ‘Dance with Sofia’ saw our very own Dance expert Sofia Jimenez Berruecos choreograph and teach a routine.

Both inspirational and aspirational, the week ended with an exclusive pep talk from France’s Women’s EURO 2022 semi-finalist coach Corinne Diacre, who said over Zoom: “Only you are capable of knowing what you want to do and what you are able to achieve. You have to be able to switch off and ignore negative comments – and whatever your goal is, give yourself the means to achieve it.”

“WE WANTED TO ENCOURAGE GIRLS IN ALL THESE CATEGORIES BY SERVING UP A RETURN TO SPORT FOR GIRLS WHO SELF-AVOWEDLY ‘USED TO BE SPORTY’; MORE SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS WHO ARE ‘SPORTY’; AND A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES TO STIMULATE INTEREST IN A VARIETY NOT JUST OF COMPETITIVE SPORTS BUT ALSO EXERCISE AND ALL-ROUND ACTIVITY.”

C. HAWES

Contributions from

C. HAWES

# Sports Trips

*There is something special about being on tour, and the opportunity to partake of this exciting experience again, post pandemic, was well received by pupils in both the Junior Branch and the Senior School.*



As early as the Autumn Term, a combined rugby and hockey delegation enjoyed a trip to Cardiff, beginning with a tour of the national stadium (aka Principality Stadium) including pitchside and tunnel access. The first on-field action took place under floodlights at a separate venue, where the UCS side lost to a last-minute try against an excellent Caerphilly team. The boys had the perfect pick-me-up with a training session the next day at Cardiff City Stadium led by Cardiff Rugby coaches. A visit to Cardiff Castle followed, before the evening highlight of watching Cardiff Rugby play the Bulls – for many of the pupils, a first live professional rugby match. It whetted the appetite for the concluding two tour games, against St Peter's A and B, which brought both victory and defeat from tough encounters. Naturally the boys went home exhausted after a fantastic weekend.

The sequel to October's rugby fest was the Malaga football tour in April. The JB squad had the benefit of four training sessions over four days with top

Spanish coaches. On two of the afternoons, the group journeyed by coach to play matches against strong local sides, winning the majority thanks to a series of superb performances. The travelling party led by Mr Walliker and Mr Tyson included some of the boys' fathers in addition to teachers. The senior contingent enjoyed reliving their youth by playing football whenever the juniors were training. Unquestionably, however, the real deal was served up by Liga clubs Granada and Rayo Vallecano who drew 2-2 at Granada's Nuevo Estadio de Los Cármenes. A thrilling 94th-minute Granada equaliser capped off a brilliant trip.

The Senior School sent its 1st XI cricket team to Gresham's Cricket Festival in June. Their first match was against George Watson College from Edinburgh, Scotland Cup champions no less, which was a rain affected fixture in which UCS came out on top thanks to a stellar performance from one of this season's standout players Zain Ali. In their second game against Gresham's the boys were out-performed which was reflected in the score but in their third game against Birkenhead they were keen to bounce back and that they did! Outstanding bowling performances from Hugo Kinder and Jacob Bor gave the batting lineup very little to do and so Charlie Gordon and Dev Nair were able to finish off the game with ease which left UCS with a positive record at the festival. The team were very satisfied with their work during the tour and had a thoroughly enjoyable time. For many of the boys, the highlight of the trip was their sunset excursion to the beach to play yet more cricket where the team bonded.

*Contributions from*

**D. COOK**  
**J. LEWIS**  
**A. WILKES**



**“I REALLY LOVED THE TRIP BECAUSE WE WERE ABLE TO COMBINE PLAYING SOME GREAT CRICKET AND HAVING A GREAT TIME WITH BOYS OF DIFFERENT YEAR GROUPS TOGETHER. I CAN'T WAIT TO PLAY IN THE FESTIVAL NEXT YEAR”**

HUGO KINDER  
Transitus

# Young Enterprise

*UCS pupils aren't just sportspeople, academics, musicians, thespians... they're also entrepreneurs! This year's success in various entrepreneurial endeavours makes interesting reading.*



From Middle School onwards, pupils in the Senior School are exposed to the concept of Higher Education and Careers as they begin to think about life beyond UCS. One co-curricular opportunity that's made available to them in Year 12, or Transitus, is Young Enterprise which aims to equip our young people with the tools for success in the ever-changing world of work.

The starting point for interested UCS students this time was a round of initial, highly impressive, presentations at the UCS Enterprise competition which launched in September. From here, 18 pupils proceeded to the more formal Young Enterprise programme. This entailed working on developing a business plan from the Autumn Term onwards and then running the newly formed student company. Right from the outset, it was clear that these pupils' originality, engagement and genuine business acumen would take them far!

This step enabled pupils to hone important skills such as communication, teamwork, organisation and time management, as well as creativity, critical thinking and decision-making. Young Enterprise at once challenges and nurtures work skills, knowledge and confidence among participants.

Contributions from  
K. CIESLAK

Come the beginning of May, UCS had two student companies prepared to compete in Young Enterprise Company of the Year for Central London. Down2Play would present an original idea for an app intended for basketball players while Iremia was pitching its box of mindfulness

products. The competition was fierce, comprising roughly 150 students from more than 15 schools across the capital, so it was a remarkable achievement that Down2Play received the event's Innovation Award and Iremia gained a

commendation in the same category.

After so much dedication to the process – no small commitment given the academic responsibilities incumbent on Sixth Formers – both teams could take great pride and satisfaction from their efforts and exploits, not to mention a raft of memories and invaluable life lessons.



**“I CAN CONFIDENTLY SAY THAT THE PROJECT HAS GIVEN ME A SET OF SKILLS THAT I WILL CARRY ON TO USE THROUGHOUT MY PROFESSIONAL CAREER.”**

JOSHUA HIRSCHKORN  
Transitus

# Clubs & Societies

*UCS pupils are nothing if not interested and interesting young people. Their vast array of hobbies, interests and talents, as well as those of our teachers, enlivened the co-curricular clubs and societies this year, as always.*

Clubs and societies provide an essential vehicle for personal development and learning beyond the classroom as part of our co-curricular offering. That 'vehicle' kept on going through the pandemic, negotiating many obstacles along the way. However, 2021–22 was the year it jumped back through the gears – and, in *Star Wars* terminology, fairly accelerated into hyperspace. (Think Harrison Ford and the Millennium Falcon.)



“This year we saw huge appetite for the co-curriculum,” said Assistant Head (Co-Curricular), Ms Lewis. “Our pupils were excited to get back into Sport, Music and Drama, and the clubs and societies were no exception. UCS pupils still have this remarkable energy and desire to run clubs for others.”

The 2021–22 programme comprised more than 70 clubs and societies in the Senior School, attesting the sheer enthusiasm and engagement of our pupils, as well as the willingness of those staff members who help to organise them. “Our teachers really wanted to take clubs and societies,” added Ms Lewis.

While almost all academic subjects are covered by a related club, other lunchtime-activity options are team or competitive societies such as Robotics, Chess, Debating or Model United Nations, and interest-based clubs like Boardgame, Gender Politics, Allotment and Wellbeing.

The particular focus for Ms Lewis this year was to promote wellbeing, sustainability and equity, each of which was reflected in a raft of new entries to the rich and varied club scene. “Wellbeing Society was new and really took off with a powerful following,” she explained. “We expanded the religious groups, so Hindu Society started along with Islamic Society. We had a new and successful Cultural Awareness and Racial Politics Society too.” These clubs exist alongside the Green Impact Society which has grown tremendously over recent years and works to lobby the school on matters of sustainability.

“THE CO-CURRICULUM TAKES YOU BEYOND JUST ACADEMIC SUBJECTS – IT IS A BROADER VISION WHICH HELPS YOU TO UNDERSTAND MORE THINGS. I PERSONALLY STARTED THE HINDU SOCIETY, TRYING TO SHARE OPINIONS AND THOUGHTS AND TO LEARN FROM OTHER PEOPLE. MY MUM COOKS FOR US EVERY WEEK TOO, THINGS LIKE SAMOSAS!”

VAAJAS SHANDILYA  
Entry

Curiously, one newcomer that appealed to all year groups was Boardgame Club; another successful new entry was Coins and Stamp Collectors' Club. Additionally, the miscellaneous Reading groups, Running and Debating maintained their popularity.

According to Deputy Head (Pastoral), Mr Wilkes, it was imperative to encourage pupils to make the most of their opportunities in the post-pandemic era – though not necessarily a hard sell. “Clearly they had missed their sporting, cultural, musical and dramatic opportunities, so we were really telling them to seize the day.”

“CLUBS AND SOCIETIES HELP YOU INTEGRATE INTO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY BECAUSE YOU MEET YOUNGER YEARS. I STARTED CULTURAL AWARENESS SOCIETY WHERE PEOPLE WILL TALK ABOUT THEIR CULTURE OR PARTS OF HISTORY THAT THEY FEEL THE CURRICULUM DOESN'T TOUCH UPON SUFFICIENTLY. I MET A LOT OF MY FRIENDS THROUGH THESE CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.”

ANANYA RADHAKRISHNAN  
Transitus

Contributions from

J. LEWIS  
A. WILKES

View from the Art room



Clay slabbing techniques were used by Year 1 children in the Pre-Prep to form poppy bowls for Remembrance Day.



A highlight this year was the performance of *Animal Farm* by Year 6 in the Summer Term. Every boy in Year 6 worked so hard during their Art lessons building up layers of papier-mâché and paint to produce masks. They were so proud to wear their pieces on stage.



Evie in Sixth working on one of her large paintings exploring the urban landscape.



Visiting artist Adam Hennessey working with A Level students as they produce paintings exploring tonal values within one colour.



Visiting artist Jeanette Barnes offering guidance to the Shell during the Big Draw workshops.

INITIAL IDEAS:



How the year starts: Julien's (Sixth) great example of drawing out ideas during the first lesson of the academic year.

Year 3 boys at the Junior Branch learnt how to mix colour and paint looking at the work of 'The Fauves'.



Developing their painting skills, Year 5 boys worked hard to produce stunning landscape silk paintings inspired by Hampstead Heath.



A whole-school focus on ceramics produced these wonderful mugs in Year 4 lessons.

Contributions from  
S. NAFTALIN  
E. CROSSLEY  
L. FARAGO

# President's Welcome



In my last welcome message, I wrote about the country returning to some sort of normality, or at least to a new normality. Sadly, I was premature in that analysis. Covid returned to bring further disruption to our lives, and for the second year running caused the cancellation of the Old Gowers' Annual Dinner.

At this present time of writing, Covid is now seen as influenza has been regarded, i.e. primarily as a temporary irritation, albeit one potentially

dangerous to the vulnerable. But, if nothing else, the pandemic should have taught us all to appreciate more what we have.

And so, it is good to be able to confirm that the next Annual Dinner is scheduled for Thursday 23rd February. For a third successive year, Old Gower Baron Daniel Finkelstein has kindly agreed to be the guest speaker. Let's hope that this time we will be able to hear him!

The Alumni Office continues to organise events such as the Summer Drinks Party and the year-group reunions, which are popular and well attended. In this context, please would everyone make every effort to attend such occasions if you have signed up for them. That being said, unforeseen circumstances can arise at the last minute. Indeed, the evening of the Summer Drinks I was actually delayed by a swan being on the Met Line, an excuse the Headmaster said he had never heard before ... an avian version of "the dog ate my homework"!

My most recent visit to UCS was to attend the Foundation's Act of Remembrance to lay a wreath for the Old Gowers who gave their lives to protect this country's freedom. It was very humbling to be reminded of the premature death of so many young men fresh out of school with a life ahead of them, in some cases days before the ceasefire. The sad events in Ukraine are a terrible reminder of the horrors of warfare.

The Old Gower Club continues to make its annual contribution to the school as part of its ten-year £100,000 donation to support bursaries. UCS sees its bursary programme as playing a vital role in the school's education mission, and so Old Gowers are strongly encouraged to support this provision. Many will have memories of their days at UCS, which to an extent can now be revisited by accessing previous Gower magazines. Some readers will know how to do this, but for those who do not the link is: [www.ucs-digitalarchives.org.uk](http://www.ucs-digitalarchives.org.uk)

It is no secret that I would like to stand down as President. It is time for a new person with new ideas. And while attempts to replace me have not yet been successful, it is hoped that with assistance from the school and its Alumni Office a new President can be appointed shortly.



Speaking of the Alumni Office, as always I place on record the Old Gowers' Club's thanks for their and the Headmaster's support. Elana Dwek has been on maternity leave during 2022, but in her absence Elsabet Malmvarn has done an excellent job. Meanwhile, a replacement Development Director is due to start early in the new year following Sophie Crofton's departure – we wish her well.

ADRIAN PATERSON (OG 1958-65)

# Memories

**“I FELT THEN, AND STILL DO, THAT UCS AND OUR TEACHERS HAD GIVEN ME THE PERFECT GROUNDING TO FACE THE WORLD AND HANDLE WHATEVER MIGHT BE THROWN IN MY DIRECTION. THE REST WAS UP TO ME!”**



**Nick Symondson**  
OG 1962–66

My time at UCS was happy but it was by the merest of flukes that I managed to secure a place at all, relying largely on the strength of my father’s organ!

Let me explain. I went to a prep school (which will remain nameless but it was in Harrow-on-the Hill) and the strict, unforgiving headmaster pulled no punches when telling my parents just before I sat the UCS exam that I was bound to fail. He was a shrewd judge: fail I did, spectacularly. My Maths was so appalling that when informed I had achieved 12% in the paper, I thought that sounded pretty good! Mr Black-Hawkins, UCS’s much kinder and imaginative Head, was crestfallen when learning I had done so badly, for two reasons: first because my brother Rod was already at the school and B-H did not like splitting up siblings (I would be followed by my younger brother Jeremy); and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, my father – who had

an organ building company – designed and had recently built UCS’s somewhat resplendent organ, sadly destroyed in a later fire. So I was offered an unheard-of second chance, and retook the exams following a couple of terms at Davies’s crammer school. That school taught me that the way to learn was not through fear, like at prep school, but through a will to succeed. I loved that idea and suddenly exams did not seem so difficult.

Somewhat apprehensively, I arrived in Jack Davies’s Entry form in 1962. It proved to be a lucky break since the form had a bit of everything and everyone, from the studious to those that would do anything for a laugh. I happily fell in midway between the two and made lifelong friends there. Jack understood his class and knew what made everyone tick; his philosophy was that he really bothered about those who bothered and that was fine by me. He was a perfect Form Tutor. He had humour and mischief but also knew how to control a class. He had an interest in his pupils but also an authority on those occasions when it was needed, of which there were quite a few. He could also score an impressive direct hit with his chalk if he saw you nodding off in Maths, health and safety not having been invented! My English and History teachers were also inspirational: Adrian Runswick for O Level and Ian McGregor for A. They brought everything they taught alive (I wept for the Mayor of Casterbridge) and they both instilled in me a lifelong love of Shakespeare, with a wish to look beyond *Julius Caesar*, *The Tempest* and *Othello*.

I was OK at gymnastics but pretty useless at rugby and cricket; however, that did not really matter because UCS was then a school, and I am sure it still is, that allowed you to concentrate on what you could do and not worry about what you couldn’t, provided you gave everything a good go.

There was also a very mixed bag of pupils, from those with very wealthy parents to those from modest backgrounds. Thus the school taught me that everyone is equal and those who were rich were no better or worse than those who were not.

O Levels and A Levels came and went, and I mustered just about the right amounts of each to secure a place at The College of Law, qualifying as a solicitor five years later and then opening the doors to my own practice three years after that.

As soon as I left school, I got so tied up in the law that there was little time, or, honestly speaking, will, to read up on much beyond. However, following a very welcome retirement, in between children, grandchildren and my long-suffering wife of 52 years, I have managed to catch up on Shakespeare’s plays, or at least all the good ones, of which most are. If only I could now thank Mr Runswick and Mr McGregor for the seed they had sown and let them know that the slow germination was worth the wait!

As a solicitor, my clients came from varied backgrounds, ranging from rich to poor, well-to-do to not so well-to-do, and I had to deal with every type of problem. I felt then, and still do, that UCS and our teachers had given me the perfect grounding to face the world and handle whatever might be thrown in my direction. The rest was up to me!

# News

*We remain hugely interested in hearing about the successes of those in our Old Gower Community. Sharing such news with our current pupil body not only interests but inspires them.*



**Archie Young CMG (OG 1989–98)**

Archie was appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) in the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Honours 2022. He was recognised for his work on global climate change, in particular several years as the UK’s lead climate negotiator, including for the presidency of the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow.

**Oliver Mayo (OG 2005–10)**

Film composer Oliver was awarded a Palme d’Or at this year’s Cannes Film Festival for Best Short Film. *The Water Murmurs* centres on writing for strings, a theme also of Beyoncé’s film *Black Is King* and *Supernova* starring Colin Firth and Stanley Tucci. Oliver was a UCS Music scholar and how uplifting that his days playing violin for our string and orchestral ensembles have so influenced his career.

*Contributions from*  
**A. YOUNG**  
**O. MAYO**

# Events

In the past year the Old Gowers’ Club has slowly returned to normal. In September 2021, after months of restrictions, we were thrilled to be able to host a big event. This was a leaving party for the 2020 leavers who had finished school unceremoniously during the first lockdown. Around 150 former pupils and staff came together to finally celebrate their shared time at UCS. It was lovely to begin the autumn with the buzz of an Old Gower event.

In November we resumed the Act of Remembrance in-person followed by the Headmaster’s Brunch. For those unable to attend, the proceedings were livestreamed. At the dawn of 2022, however, an increase in Covid cases caused some events, including the Old Gowers’ Annual dinner, to be postponed. Fortunately, this situation did not last too long and we soon restarted Class Reunions among other activities.

The first Class Reunion of the year was for the class of 2012. Ten years after leaving UCS, members of our 2012 vintage assembled in the Sixth Form Centre to reminisce about school days and, for some, to see faces they hadn’t surveyed since leaving. Alongside former teachers, they remarked on how quickly the decade had passed, albeit some Old Gowers had hardly changed at all. The returnees were mightily impressed by the new Sixth Form Centre.

*Contributions from*  
**E. MALMVARN**

The next reunion brought together the Class of 1972. With the passing of 50 years since some of this cohort had stepped foot in UCS, there was plenty to catch up on. Conversation sparked immediately as stories and memories were shared. The Summer Drinks Party rounded off the OG calendar for the academic year. As always, the Summer Drinks were a wonderful gathering of Old Gowers of all generations.

In other news we launched an exciting new online community in October 2021, available initially to all Old Gowers. UCS Connect is a bespoke platform where users create profiles, groups, photo albums and events, but can also list employment opportunities and mentoring requests. We now have more than 500 members and hope to grow this community further.



# Travel Scholarships

*Each year, members of the leaving class are awarded travel scholarships by the school to explore the world beyond UCS. We are grateful to them for sharing their experiences with us for The Gower.*



**American Football:  
New York and New Jersey**

*Ed Rollo*

Thanks to the incredible generosity of the UCS travel scholarship, I was able to visit New York and New Jersey to look at the structure of American football teams, from training methods to overall organisation, to help prepare me for studying Sports Management at university. I was lucky enough to attend a New York Jets’ open practice and watch the team train; a fascinating experience. I saw how the athletic trainers structured the players’ workouts, including practice runs lasting approximately two hours. Warm-ups, position group drills and a full-contact practice in which both offense and defense fine-tuned their plays for the weekend. At the end of the session I was delighted to be approached by Jets wide receiver Elijah Moore, with whom I had a brief conversation about the upcoming season and his

**“I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO ATTEND A NEW YORK JETS’ OPEN PRACTICE AND WATCH THE TEAM TRAIN; A FASCINATING EXPERIENCE.”**

expectations. A real highlight of the trip! Later in the week, I attended a careers fair organised by the New York Jets and hosted at their stadium in New Jersey. Meeting representatives of organisations such as the New York Yankees, Brooklyn Nets and New York City FC gave me an invaluable insight into their experiences of working in sport and their roles in their respective industries. This event really helped me understand the way in which PR and media interact with sport and learn more about the day-to-day efforts made by sports teams to keep them thriving.

On top of this I attended a New York Mets game at Citi Field and a New York Jets pre-season game at MetLife Stadium; a fantastic end to an unforgettable trip. Thanks once again to UCS for making it all possible.

## Malawi

*Jake Brass*

To sum up my time in Malawi in such a small space is an impossible task. It cannot do justice to such life-changing, enthralling and eye-opening experiences.

I spent seven months living and working onsite at the Bangwe HIV/AIDS Self-Help Initiative (BAHASI) charity. I worked closely with orphans or vulnerable children (OVCs) as their primary source of entertainment. I also helped with other projects, like a tailoring scheme for vulnerable women, BAHASI’s nursery for around 90 vulnerable children, and various uncategorised tasks that benefited the above.



The OVC programme made up the largest part of my work. We had about 32 OVCs under our care. They came home from school at 4.30pm and were asleep, always, by 8.30pm because they woke at 4am every day to clean! This gave me a four-hour window to get as much done as possible:

helping with homework, reading in the library, watching TV, playing sport, and lots of dancing. My mornings were spent helping colleagues with other projects or planning activities.

As someone who has now achieved a lifelong dream (having written in my UCS JB leavers book that I wanted to travel and help the ‘third world’ – yes, I know, an archaic phrase), I can safely say my time in Malawi was incredibly satisfying and empowering. I was surrounded by children with very few, if any, material goods and often complicated home lives, and yet they were seemingly the happiest children I’d met.

To say seven months living in a Malawi orphanage was easy would be wrong. Nor would I say it was difficult. I started learning a new language, met the most amazing, selfless and passionate people, explored a new country, and saw things, good and bad, beyond my previous imagination. I will always be thankful for these lessons.

**“I CAN SAFELY SAY MY TIME IN MALAWI WAS INCREDIBLY SATISFYING AND EMPOWERING.”**



**Is there life outside London?**

- Mia Eldor-Levy*
- Pamela Shahbakhti*
- Rhianna Spencer-Moore*
- Sara Bonakdar*

We initially planned a month in Spain; however, because of Covid, we chose to spend time in the UK instead. After all, there must be more to the UK than London, right?

Our journey began in Scotland. From Edinburgh Castle to St Andrews University, we gained an insight into Scottish history and culture. From deep-fried Mars Bars and museums to the Royal Mile, cocktails, and landscapes beyond our dreams, we were captivated. Edinburgh, simply stunning!

Thence to the Lake District to discover another history, another culture enriched by nature. We began in Kendal and its ruined castle, the day of the EURO final (England lost!). The next day we travelled to Lake Windermere, looking at different watery habitats, and hearing about land management and threats such as invasive species. Later we ascended Orrest Head, enjoying views of the Lake District fells, Lake Windermere, Morecambe Bay and the Pennines.

The following day we set off for Penrith via a jaunt through the woods from Glenridding to the Glencoyne Park estate and taking in the majestic Aira Force waterfall.

In Penrith, we continued our walks, surveying the nature around us and the conservation work involved in keeping wildlife and local communities alive. Brougham Castle, Lowther Castle, Beacon Hill, Derwent Pencil Museum, Borrowdale and Pooley Bridge. By climbing rocks, swimming in lakes and trekking across beautiful terrain, we deepened our knowledge of the country beyond London. The sense of calm, the all-consuming peace, is something we cannot forget.

On reflection, a Spanish sojourn would have been an amazing zigzag through a country we would have loved; however, we would have missed out on the beauty we stumbled across (literally and figuratively) just a train ride away. We thank UCS for making this possible.

**“FROM DEEP-FRIED MARS BARS AND MUSEUMS TO THE ROYAL MILE, COCKTAILS, AND LANDSCAPES BEYOND OUR DREAMS, WE WERE CAPTIVATED.”**

**The Magen David Adom Overseas Volunteer Programme**

*Raphael Kohn,  
known at UCS as Daniel Kohn.*

The following report contains mentions of suicide, drug overdoses and death.

In 2020, I applied for a travel scholarship with UCS and Northcott to travel to Israel to participate in the Magen David Adom (MDA, the Israeli ambulance service) Overseas Volunteer Programme. I went through a lengthy application process and worked hard to quickly learn basic Hebrew from scratch to get onto the programme. Then, there was a pandemic.

My application was postponed twice. Thanks to the Trustees' generosity, I was able to defer my travel scholarship until I could come to Israel to participate. In mid-July 2022, I boarded my plane to Israel, with one massive difference between then and when I left UCS: I had completed two years of medical school.

I completed the 60-hour training course in a hostel in Jerusalem, meeting participants from across the world, including Australia, Canada, the USA, South Africa, France, and the Netherlands. I was one of only two British participants in the 82-participant cohort! The course covered basic and advanced CPR, treating trauma cases, and other necessary skills needed to work in an ambulance. Much of the 'knowledge' covered was familiar to me from medical school, but most of the skills were new to me. Many of the participants, whose ages ranged



**“PART OF MY MISSION WAS TO DISCOVER WORKING IN A MEDICAL SYSTEM IN ANOTHER COUNTRY WITH ANOTHER CULTURE FOR MYSELF, WITH MY OWN EYES. I INDEED FOUND ISRAEL VERY DIFFERENT TO THE UK!”**

from 18-30 and none of whom was yet in medical school, asked me for help with some of the taught content as the only medical student on the course. The entire course was taught in English, with a basic knowledge of Hebrew required to follow the programme and 300 words of specific medical terms to know. Ten days, three exams (one written and two practical) and many, many portions of schnitzel later, I went to Tel Aviv to get started on my four weeks of practical volunteering.

I worked for 40 hours per week (five shifts a week, of which three were night shifts and two were day shifts) in mainly the white 'Lavan' ambulances, which are the minor injuries first-response ambulances. I treated fainting patients, multiple Covid-positive patients, many patients with mental health issues, including panic attacks and some suicidal patients, a few strokes, and quite a few elderly patients who had fallen at home. Some of the more dramatic cases included major road traffic accidents, of which one was at high-speed on the motorway and required two ambulance crews and a fire crew just to safely remove the patient, stabilised on a back board, through the boot of the car! I also treated multiple patients who were ill from drinking too much alcohol or overdosing on recreational drugs. In one case, we were called to a flat where the floor was littered with used needles, and the patient was lying unconscious on the other side of the room. To ensure that we were safe, we first had to clear all the needles before reaching the patient and performing CPR, using a defibrillator and oxygen to attempt to revive the patient, but unfortunately, this was not successful.

The programme is very independent, and I lived in Tel Aviv in a shared studio apartment with another participant. In my free time, I explored the Old City of Jerusalem, especially areas I hadn't seen

before, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (where it is thought that the body of Jesus was buried) and the streets of the Muslim Quarter. I explored the incredible Bauhaus 'White City' architecture in Tel Aviv and even visited a stunning Klezmer-Jazz fusion bar on several evenings to hear some fantastic, unique performances! I was so disappointed to have missed Tel Aviv Pride, which happened a few weeks before I arrived in Israel, but I hope to attend it in the future.

Part of my mission was to discover working in a medical system in another country with another culture for myself, with my own eyes. I indeed found Israel very different to the UK! While I am used to reasonably strict timings at medical school, timing was much more fluid in MDA and classes didn't always start on time. I also found that all the acronyms for history-taking that I learned at medical school aren't used in MDA, so I had to relearn many of them!

Overall, I had a fantastic time with MDA. The ability to treat patients and save lives is of unimaginable value. I worked incredibly hard and saw some very challenging cases, but it was all worthwhile, and the things I've learnt from this will help me immensely in my future medical career. I wrote a daily Instagram diary of everything I did and saw in Israel, which can be found under '@raphinanambulance'. I am very thankful to UCS and the Northcott trustees for helping me make this idea a reality.

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