



Headlines

January 2019: Issue 3

Welcome back to a new term. I hope that you have enjoyed the Christmas break and that a number of you will have sat down on Christmas Day, as I did, to enjoy a Redborne turkey! Thanks to all the staff and students on the farm for all their efforts in what is now a school tradition of plucking and packing at the end of term.

You may also have noticed that we came back slightly later than some other schools in the area. We took the view that we wanted to ensure that everyone had a full two week break at Christmas at the end of a long term in which everyone had worked very hard and so we used our Academy status to vary the holiday slightly from the 'CBC standard'. Please note that because of this, we continue in the summer term until Wednesday July 24th, slightly later than some other local schools who returned on January 2nd.

Some of you may have seen the series 'School' that was on the BBC before Christmas and which focused on a number of schools within a multi-academy trust (MAT) and in particular on the impact of the financial squeeze on school funding that has taken place over the last eight years. Politicians are very adept at spinning the figures and while it is true that some budgets have been protected in cash terms, what they fail to tell you is that the very modest pay rises for staff have not been matched by funding increases to schools and that more money has then been taken out of budgets because of increases in employers' contributions for pensions and national insurance. School sixth form budgets have actually been cut in cash terms by about £2,000 per student so that the funding is 'fairer' when compared with colleges. For a school with over 400 students in the sixth form you will see that this has reduced our funding by over £800,000 per year.

As the TV series showed, finance is one of those things that many people find boring and are happy to ignore until it all goes wrong! Where Redborne benefits, of course, is that we remain a very popular and oversubscribed school and the increase in student numbers in years 9 – 11 has helped us to avoid some of the worst effects of the cuts. We have also resisted the temptation to cut back on sixth form courses; our sixth form numbers remain buoyant and we are the largest post-16 school in Central Beds. All of this has helped us to stay solvent and while we have to remain careful with all aspects of expenditure into the future, we are in good financial health.

However you cannot make cuts of this magnitude without their being some effects on the system and I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to so many of my colleagues for the way that they have risen to the challenge, for example by taking on larger classes, most notably in the sixth form. I would also like to offer particular thanks to my colleagues who have taken on extra duties in recent years as senior colleagues have retired and not been replaced on a like for like basis. This willingness on the part of the team to 'step up' has meant that we have been able to make some very significant savings at senior level which has allowed us to protect the 'front-line' offer in the

classroom. In particular, we have been able to protect staffing levels in the core subjects of English and maths so that students can have more individualised attention in smaller classes.

We also continue to work closely with our colleagues at Woodland and Alameda, and with colleagues in other secondary and upper schools across the county. This co-operation is important, but at Redborne we have not been convinced of the benefits of formalising these arrangements through becoming part of a MAT. This kind of change could very easily divert our energies from the core purpose of making Redborne as successful as it can be. You may also have seen reports in the press about some MATs where questions have been raised about the proportion of funds that go to executive salaries or to paying consultants.

While the educational and political landscape can change quite quickly, I thought it would be useful to reassure you that we intend to continue as a stand-alone academy for the immediate future.

And so to this issue, where we celebrate some of the events that took place in the latter part of last term and which once again demonstrates the richness and diversity of the activities that take place at Redborne. I remain hugely proud of the dedication, commitment, talent and enthusiasm of the staff and students that make up the Redborne community.

This is a great place to work and learn and thanks again to all those who contribute to that success.

Happy New Year!



Steve Gray, Headteacher

Boot Fairs

Our next indoor boot fair will be held on *Sunday 20th January*. If you have items to sell and would like to reserve a table please contact Eva Hobson at stevahobson@redborne.com or on 01525 842654 to reserve a table.

Tables are £8 each and sellers arrive at North Reception from 7am to set up.

The fair is open to buyers from 8am - 12pm. Entrance fee is £1, reduced to 50p after 10am. Refreshments are sold in the North School canteen.

All profits from the boot fairs go into the school fund – in the last year the money raised was roughly the amount needed to pay for the purchase of our school 7-seater, which has been a valuable addition to the school transport provision and has been particularly useful for taking small groups of students to events, saving on fuel costs and emissions when compared with the use of a minibus.



Spring Boot Fair: Sunday 10th March

Redborne Remembers

As part of the Ampthill Armistice 100 commemorations, Redborne were represented at the Remembrance Day service in Ampthill. Year 9 volunteers took part in a parade from the war memorial in Ampthill Great Park and then laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in The Alameda on behalf of the whole school. Thank you to Sophie Fowler, Natawood Hackett-Mingsong and Emily-Kate Hulbert for their excellent service to the school and the wider community on this occasion.

Redborne staff and students were also present at and participated in the memorial service at Flitwick cenotaph. A wreath was also laid on behalf of the Redborne school community. Thank you to students Carmen Denton and Tommy Ilgunas for volunteering to lay the wreath on the school's behalf.

The textiles department ran a competition for Year 9 students to design a remembrance themed installation. Elements of the winning designs produced by Cameron Shuter, Isla Stafferton and Emily Murfin were used to create the final installation pieces which contained the work produced by Year 9 design and technology students. The displays received great feedback from students, staff and visitors to the school, including two representatives of the British Legion who were invited to view the work and kindly presented Cameron with a commemorative centenary pin for his involvement in the project. This was a great way for students to remember friends and family members who have and still do serve their country – the photograph tribute boards that formed part of the installation beautifully highlighted just how Redborne remembers...



Catering update

The cashless catering system is now up and running and is generally working very smoothly. We know that human nature being what it is, some people left things until the last minute and indeed some of you may feel that you have missed out because you didn't sign up in the first wave. It's never too late and even if you are not a regular user of the canteen you may want to have some money in your account for those days when you forget your sandwiches or you just fancy an extra snack or a hot drink during the colder months.

Accounts can be updated on the wisepay section on the school website at <https://www.wisepay.co.uk/store/generic/template.asp?mID=123660&ACT=nav>

Some students have asked how they can top up the credit for the cashless catering because they have earnings of their own and a debit card. The good news is we can now make this happen - it works in the same way a parent tops up Wisepay with credit, we just add the student as a second person to the same account.



If students would like to do this, then all you need to do is email Mrs Yau in the finance office on stsyau@redborne.com with the email address you would like to use for the account. We will then add your details to the system.

Once you have the details, you can login to Wisepay through the school website, update your details, check your balance and once you have added a debit card, add funds. You can also do this via the Wisepay app that you can download to your phone. You will need the number 45579819 to find the school's Wisepay account on the app. This is the easiest way to manage cashless catering.

Once you have added credit, you can then make purchases in the school canteens but also access the other facilities Wisepay offers, such as trips, etc. Credit can take a few minutes to work its way through the system though. Parents are reminded to check the credit left on a regular basis and if a student does go overdrawn, to make sure you top up by the overdrawn amount plus some more for purchases. We can't offer extended credit!



Don't forget that the sixth form café serves continuously from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm and that North School canteen is open for breakfast in the morning from 8.15.

If you fancy a hot drink to warm you up in the morning, don't wander off to the 101, but come for a coffee in the canteen – it's half the price, you'll be on site so that you won't be late and you'll be supporting the school rather than adding to the profits of a multi-national corporation!... and maybe we'll also be able to tempt you with one of our bargain bacon rolls to start the day.



Teachers



Cast photo from the school production of **Teachers** at the end of November which was a great success, drawing rave reviews from staff and parents alike.

Mr Francis writes: "Congratulations to everyone involved in the whole school production of Teachers! Not only am I very proud of the cast who played to full houses for all three nights, but I am very grateful to the crew and helpers who made the production such a success."

We also received this tribute from a parent who had seen the show:

"I would like to express my absolute delight in watching the recent school production of Teachers: the show was magnificent. I have seen many shows at many theatres and this was one of the most enjoyable. The cast were tight knit and fluid in their team work and interaction. Timing was wonderful. The young cast projected humour, not always easy. In fact I was so impressed on the first evening that I bought 3 more members of my family along to a following show. Hats off to the production team and director. Well done to all the pupils involved."

Medical Mavericks

by Gurvan, Maddy, Charlotte and Holly (Year 11)

On the 17th of December we attended a Medical Mavericks workshop with around 40 people in our year. In the 90 minutes we were allowed to have a go with a range of medical equipment including an infra-red vein scanner, an ultrasound machine and an ECG Machine. We could also take blood from a fake arm, try simulated keyhole surgery and wear "drunk goggles".



We had a great time and learnt lots of new things about working in the medical sector. We have been inspired by some of the things that we learnt, and now many of us are considering jobs in the medical profession.

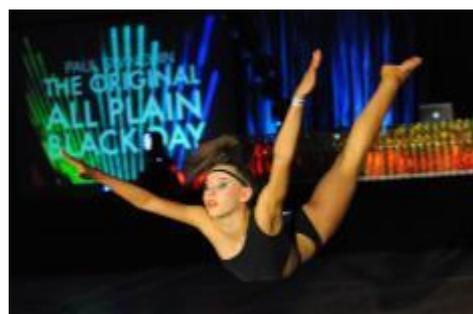
Kirsten Grant – Dancing Queen

Kirsten Grant in year 10 has been dancing and competing in the world of freestyle dance for some five years now, rising through the very challenging grades, from a “New Beginner” to a “Premier Champion” in almost record time! She currently is competing in her second year as an “U16 Premier Champion”.



Kirsten attends the prestigious Academy London School of freestyle dance, and under the direction of Mr Danny Baker and Ms Kelly Westgate, two of the most respected teachers within the sport, this is where Kirsten has made her mark, winning countless prestigious tournaments! She can at times attend 6 sessions a week of rigorous fitness, stamina and intricate choreography sessions to prepare her for events.

Kirsten has represented Team England at IFDC championships in the past, competing all over Europe including Scotland, Ireland, Norway, and also attending lectures in various countries. 2018 was an incredible year for Kirsten, amassing 12 “high end prestigious” title wins and countless other podium places! 2019 has the potential to be her most successful year yet!!



Maths and Computing Superstars



We had eleven students who competed in the Bebras Computing Challenge. Of these, four scored in the top 10% of all entries for their age group. In the senior (14-16) category Harry Staplehurst, Finlay Barford and Blaire Duff all scored over 120 points compared with the national average of 75 for the 19,500 entrants nationwide. In the Elite category for 16-18 year old students, Max Lister scored 156 marks, the highest of any student in the county. Many congratulations to these students who will now be entered into the TCS Oxford Computing Challenge next March.



We also had 40 students who entered for the senior maths challenge, with the majority succeeding in getting one of the certificates: six students achieved the bronze award and 12 achieved silver. Seven students achieved the top level gold award – Mark Riley, Harry Ashby, Max Lister, Michael Wetherill, Charlie Galvin, Oliver Wilshaw and Emily Newsome. These seven students qualified for the next round of the competition, somewhat bizarrely called the ‘Kangaroo’, and Harry and Oli gained a merit certificate at this level. Well done to all 40 students who took on such a tough challenge, with particular congratulations to the top level award winners.

Christmas concert

report by Rhianna-May Duffy, year12



Redborne's Christmas concert last term was possibly one of the highest standards we've ever had! The music was a challenge to play but the results were incredible. The program was especially varied, including repertoire from Corelli, Stephen Schwartz and Slade. Each ensemble brought something unique to the night. However the unexpected star of the night almost stole the entire show! Our own headteacher performed a surprise solo with the boys' acapella group that spread smiles throughout the audience.

A massive thank you to the talented Mr Bottone, Mr Price and Mr Cappello who always help students to reach their best potential, as well as all the peripatetic teachers that give their time and considerably influence the amazing quality of the music at Redborne. Overall, the concert was a fantastic way to end the term in front of an enthusiastic audience of several hundred parents, students and members of the local community.

Further pictures from the concert are on the website and students can also access pictures on Lesson Store.



Biology Club: Dissecting a Jaguar

by Keesha Coker, Olivia Fowler and Leonie Paddon

Just before Christmas, the Biology Club went on an excursion to the Royal Veterinary College in London. After looking at intriguing exhibits, such as skeletons, preserved organs and informative displays, we were led into a room with a table in the middle with a mysterious shape underneath a sheet.

Our lecture began with an introduction from one of the college's professors. Everyone present wondered what animal was under the sheet; we assumed it was a domestic animal like a dog or a sheep. To the audience's surprise, the animal on the table was a jaguar that the college had acquired from a zoo after it died naturally at a ripe old age.

Later in the dissection, the professor explained that jaguars have strong arm and shoulder muscles for climbing, they also have large muscles in the head to kill prey by crushing its skull. The jaguar is the only big cat that can do this. We also learnt that arthritis can be identified by rough patches on the bone and that many professionals can tell the sound an animal makes by its vocal cords.



Overall, the evening was very enjoyable and informative.

A Flyer from the Air Cadets

... and I suppose if any organisation is a suitable one to have a 'flyer', it is the Air Cadets! They are having a recruitment evening in Flitwick at the end of January. For further information, please see their leaflet below or visit the website at www.1985atc.org



Do you enjoy a challenge?

Want to make new friends?

Interested in any of the following activities?

Flying, Gliding, Adventure Training, Shooting, Field Craft, Military Skills, Sports

Join the Air Cadets NOW!



ROYAL AIR FORCE
AIR CADETS
the next generation

1985 (Flitwick) Squadron
Recruitment Evening

Thursday 21st January 2019
19:45 until 21:15

At Squadron Headquarters

Amphill Cadet Centre

Weburn Road

Amphill

Bedfordshire

MK45 2HX

For More Info:

E-mail 1985@aircadets.org

OR

Visit www.1985atc.org

"The Air Training Corps really is an excellent organisation where young people get the opportunity to do things they would otherwise never do."



If you're aged between 12 (Year 8) and 17, come and see for yourself what we do! Flitwick Squadron is a highly active unit with dedicated, experienced staff and enthusiastic cadets. We pride ourselves in developing the skills that will set you apart from the crowd in later life!



NEED project – reverse advent calendars

In November we challenged students to make a 'reverse advent calendar' in their form group. Instead of opening a window or eating a chocolate (or in some cases opening their make-up calendars!) they were asked to bring in a food item and place it in a box. Many forms took this challenge on and by the end of term we had about 40 boxes filled with both tasty goodies and more basic food staples. Some classes even provided other essentials such as shampoo and baby wipes. Even students in classes who did not have a full box were able to contribute a few items. Every little really did help.

On Friday 14th December Gordon, from Bedfordshire's NEED project, came and collected all our boxes. He was delighted that we filled the back of his van. This project provides essential support for families across Bedfordshire who are struggling to make ends meet. They deliver many thousands of parcels and our contribution was greatly appreciated.



Denis Baker of the Need Project has asked us to pass on their message of thanks to the staff, parents and children from the school.

"The Need Project would like to thank all of the parents and children for their generous donations of food. The parcels make a huge difference to families in need and even more so at this Christmas time. We wish you all a wonderful and blessed Christmas. Thank you for your continued support and partnership with us."

We are now looking forward to December 2019 when we hope to get even more students involved.

Thinking of working at Redborne?

Do you know anyone who is keen on working at Redborne? Vacancies often occur throughout the year, so check out the school website for further details.

<https://www.redbornecommunitycollege.com/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=41>

Staff Wellbeing Training Day

Many thanks to the many parents, carers and local businesses who supported our staff wellbeing day on January 4th.

This was an excellent way to start the new term; teaching and support staff were able to choose from a wide range of options for the afternoon session including Pilates, yoga, rhythmic drumming, osteopathy and holistic therapies.

Thank you also for the cup-cakes provided for staff by one of our very kind parents – they were delicious and much appreciated!



Mrs Crowther, *staff wellbeing co-ordinator*.

Independent learning

Since June 2017, students in Year 10 and 11 have been developing skills and abilities in studying by themselves within independent learning lessons once a fortnight. Amongst a wide variety of topics, students have been learning to how use mind maps, Venn diagrams and other graphic organisers, how to read actively, how to improve their memory using mnemonics and spacing and how to use revision guides, textbooks, notes and videos to create revision cards. Teachers have been impressed by the progress made by many students and it has been great to see increasing levels of engagement and involvement in effective and active revision and self-study. The intention of independent learning lessons is to ensure all Redborne students know what to learn, how to learn and why they should learn independently and the work done in these lessons has been empowering many students to complete further independent work outside of school in a more competent and confident manner, all in order to maximise student progress and achievement. Here are some comments on the programme from current Year 10 students:

“The work I do in lessons I carry on at home like when I do mind maps and then use them elsewhere.”

“It gives me revision time for upcoming tests which I really like as some people may not be able to do revision at home.”

“These lessons have improved my learning and revision as there a no distractions at school compared with the distractions and choices of other things to do at home.”

“I have been able to work quicker because I have reinforced my knowledge.”

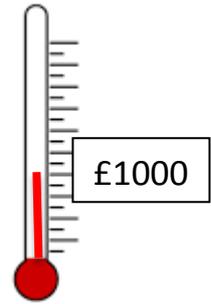
“I speak French more often at home and with more clarity and enthusiasm. I’m also encouraged to revise at home by revising in Independent Study.”

“My teacher encourages revision and is pleased to notice that I do revision.”

“They have made my learning and revision so much better, I have improved in my subjects.”

School Fund

Thank you to all those parents who have kindly made a donation to the school fund so far this year – we have reached a total of over £1,000 to date. If every family were prepared to make a donation of £5, this would raise several thousand pounds in extra funds that we can use for the benefit of the students beyond the standard government funding. As we move towards the spring, we are planning to use some of the school funds to go towards additional picnic benches around the site to give students more seating to use at lunchtime. If you would still like to contribute, we will be very happy to receive a donation either by cheque or through Wisepay on the website at



<https://www.wisepay.co.uk/store/generic/template.asp?ACT=nav&mID=123661&nm=2>

Presentation evenings

At the end of last term we held our annual presentation evenings for GCSE and A level where we distribute certificates, celebrate success and give out awards to prize-winners in each subject and also some special awards across the year groups. One of the uses of the school fund is to pay for the awards given out on these evenings and this year we also introduced a new innovation with a drinks and snacks reception for the returning A level students.

The Headteacher's prize was awarded for top effort and achievement and this year for the first time we had glass trophies made that the students would be able to keep as a permanent record of their success. The pictures show the two winners of the Headteacher's Prize for 2018: Oli Wilshaw (GCSE) and Erin McIntosh (A level).



For both evenings we were able to produce souvenir booklets which listed all the citations for the prize-winners as well as having a full listing of all the students in the year and some photos from their prom.

It is the funds from the boot fairs and the parental donations to school fund that has made this all possible, so thanks once again to all of you who do make a contribution.

Students in the Community

We are a large school with 1650 students. Most students behave impeccably both in school and out in the community and, as can be seen above, many are great ambassadors for the school in so many different ways. We are looking to acknowledge these contributions through the Redborne Award.

Unfortunately, there is a small minority who are not so co-operative and on occasions we do have to deal with complaints from the local community.

We take student behaviour very seriously and will take action within school where we can identify the perpetrators. We also work closely with the local police and meet regularly with our community police officer, PC Aaron Dagley. For further details of a recent police initiative in the local area, please follow this link to the Bedfordshire police website.

<https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/news-and-appeals/parents-warned-flitwickampthillasb-jan19>

Our message to students is:

- **THINK** before you act – make sure your actions are not going to harm or annoy others.
- **BE INDEPENDENT** – don't be tempted to follow your mates if you know what they are doing is illegal, wrong or dangerous.
- **SHOW INITIATIVE** - try to persuade your friends to stop if you think they are planning to do something anti-social.
- **BE CO-OPERATIVE** – if you know something that's happening or about to happen is wrong, report it and work with us to make our local community a happier and safer place.

We are sure that parents will want to support us in reinforcing this message.

Dates for your Diary

Events coming up later this term

30 th January	Year 11 parents evening
7 th February	Year 9 parents evening – student option choices
19 th February	Year 12 parents evening
27 th February	Battle of the Bands (junior/KS3)
28 th February	Battle of the Bands (senior)
18 th March	EPQ presentation evening
20 th March	Redborne Dance Showcase
21 st March	Redborne Community Concert