



Newsletter



Generation Pandemic

Pupils Face Challenges Like Never Before

What are our generation's greatest challenges at this time? We would like everyone to see the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through the eyes of students. It's a real shock, being back at school after five long months in lockdown. On first impressions, the new school day seems very different to what it was before. After not seeing our friends for several months, the reunion should have been joyous: it's instinctive to run up and give someone a hug, but you pause, retreat. This is the new normal. With all the new precautions in place, it's difficult to settle into the school routine. I think it's even more challenging for the new first years: COVID is making an already difficult transition even more demanding. Completing work at home during lockdown has shown that learning this year is proving to be significantly different to previous years. Google Classroom was the main site for homework during lockdown, with work being issued on a weekly basis for pupils to complete, but it was never going to be that straightforward. Time management and staying motivated during lockdown were big issues for many, and understandably so. Also, home distractions like mobile phones and family members could make concentrating difficult. The news came out that from Monday, the 31st of August, face coverings would be mandatory in schools across the country. This provides comfort and reassurance to many, as it lets us feel safer and better protected in the school community. Although face-to-face interaction and facial gestures may be less easy to understand, it is a beneficial and necessary precaution to keep us safe from the pandemic. It is essential that we all remember to sanitise our hands regularly and wipe down our workplace before and after use. There should always be at least two metres between staff and students. The new routines will take a lot of getting used to, but we'll be on a roll once we all settle back into school life. It is everyone's own responsibility to respect the precautions: a team approach to following procedures is the only way to achieve the safest possible outcome for everybody. Most importantly, we must encourage each other to stay positive and motivated during these unprecedented times. We must all be Responsible, Respectful and Resilient. *(By Ellie H)*



Climate Crisis

Climate change will be the greatest challenge humanity faces and will affect every biological system which makes Earth habitable. Already temperatures are rising, hydrological cycles are changing and sea levels are rising, all of which contribute to the frequency and intensity of natural disasters. If this rise continues, food production could halt and levels of homelessness could rapidly spike as areas become inhospitable. Even more species could become extinct. There is power in young people. It is our future. We can make a difference. Small ripples will create big waves. (Continued on page 2)

Head Teacher's Message

Welcome to a special edition of our school newsletter. This publication has more of a magazine feel, showcasing the writing talents of our young people, rather than reporting on the many events and busy life of our school community. Thanks to the S6 Communications Team, supported ably by Mr Wellcoat, for their hard work in creating this new look and thought-provoking newsletter. I was delighted to welcome colleagues back to the Academy on 11th August, followed by our young people for their induction days prior to their return to full-time education in the school building. I would like to recognise and thank all staff for their incredible hard work and professionalism throughout the current pandemic. A special thanks to my Senior Leadership Team (SLT) colleagues who have worked tirelessly over recent months to ensure our safe return to Strathaven Academy. We are currently living in a time of great uncertainty, alongside a virus that has led to societal and economic harm across the world. This has presented us all with many new - and at times extremely difficult - challenges, some of which are highlighted in the articles included. In these times, we must all stick together and, as Ellie H

says, be Responsible, Respectful and Resilient. Thank you to parents/carers who have provided their support and best wishes. We live in a period when we all find out important information simultaneously and I thank you for your patience and understanding while we navigate our way through the ever-changing landscape of guidance and advice. We all want the very best experiences and outcomes for our fantastic young people. Let's use this time of crisis to build an even better education system for the future. To each and every one of our young people, I say thank you. Thank you for embracing our new routines - continuously sanitising your hands, wearing your face coverings, managing split breaks, navigating restricted movement around the school and participating in outdoor PE whatever the weather! Thank you for being so positive, incredibly resilient and relentlessly optimistic. Please remember that you are all ambassadors of our school and wider community, and we will be judged by our collective actions. We are all in this together, we must all act together, we will get through this together, and together we will thrive once again. Take care and stay safe.

Climate Crisis

Reduce your plastic consumption: use a refillable water bottle, bring reusable cutlery when you go out, keep a jute bag handy and try to buy food with the least amount of packaging such as loose fruit and vegetables - or why not try to grow your own? Reduce your carbon footprint by lift sharing, walking/cycling where possible, unplugging electrical appliances when not in use and swapping old incandescent light bulbs for compact fluorescent lamp lightbulbs (CFL) as they use 75 per cent less energy whilst giving the same amount of light and lasting ten times as long. My message to world leaders is this: there is no more time. No warm-ups, no delays. The race against climate change must start now or we lose our Earth. Act with your nation's children and their children in mind. We must move together, now, today. Forests are burning, land is flooding, 53 percent of wildlife has been killed

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)
BY GRACE M PUBLISHED IN THE SCOTSMAN

in half a century and there is no planet B. We are bringing about the apocalypse with every second we wait. How many more agonies do there have to be before you wake up? We're ready, are you? I want young people to know that this is our world. Our future, our homes, our lives. We have to raise our voices as one if we are to be heard. If you are laughed at, laugh back harder. This is not a fight that we should have to face and yet we must. Don't be drowned out, stand tall and have your say in the crafting of the new world. You are so very important.



MR BOYD,
HEAD TEACHER



Special Edition RETURN TO SCHOOL

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If you have something to report in our newsletter, email office@strathaven.s-lanark.sch.uk providing the name and class of the person(s) involved with their achievement/success and a photograph if possible.

You can also report achievements to our **google form** on the **school website** under 'News' and 'Wider Achievement'.

Visit our website at
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Is it Too Soon to Face the Music?

We face challenges in every department in the school, especially the practical subjects. Due to restrictions the government has put in place, singing and playing of brass and woodwind instruments have been temporarily suspended from school. There is also the missing social aspect: no extracurricular activities. Yet even with these new rules, the department's spirits haven't been dampened; teachers continue to give all they can to every student and, with the easing of restrictions, they are slowly regaining the energy that goes hand in hand with music. So, to answer the question: is it too soon to face the music? No, because one of the things we need now more than ever is music. *(By Evan L)*

Stra'ven Story

The nationwide lockdown was a challenging time for all the pupils of Strathaven Academy, but one second year student took it upon herself to do an admirable deed during lockdown - she baked for her entire street! Second year student Mabel D of Kype decided to bake for the eight houses on her street for V Day to brighten up an otherwise dark and scary time. Well done, Mabel! *(By Eidane M)*



Welcome our New Leadership Team

Aoibhinn and Callum are our new school captains. As S6 pupils, we know this school very well, and it is our intention to make the most of our final year at school. It is important to acknowledge the hard work our fellow pupils have put in and the school experiences they have missed out on due to the pandemic. We also acknowledge the incredible results our year group has achieved so far academically. S6 is also about the extra events and projects we organise. The electives we choose in S6 are very important, as we gain knowledge and acquire new skills to use after school. Many of these demonstrate how important pupil voice is in taking responsibility, working in a group and carrying

out projects. Our captains aim to continue the amazing work completed by previous senior pupils. It is our responsibility to inspire and mentor the whole school community and continue to provide an ethos of pride in Strathaven Academy.

PHOTOS BY JOSHUA D



Frontline Fatigue

We've all been affected by the outbreak of the Corona Virus, that much is obvious. Everyone knows that what's going on is no laughing matter, and everyone's experience is different. As a member of a household who had four family members working in the frontline battle against COVID-19, I know that it's certainly a time that's stressful for everyone. Frontline workers have it very rough, and, coming home, fearing for my family's wellbeing isn't something I ever want to experience again after this is over. My mother works in a methadone clinic, and although she works part-time, she was still close to contracting COVID. Her work place was turned into a testing centre where patients would test either negative or positive, and, as a result, she would come home every day and couldn't come near any of us. Socially distancing in public is hard enough, never mind doing so in your own house. One of my cousins was working in the maternity ward, and constantly worked exhausting shift patterns and was unable to let mothers see their newly-born children. The other was working in the hospital while pregnant, and struggled to do any extensive work under the weight of the required

PPE and her baby. My sister, perhaps the most affected, works in Wishaw. She constantly has to do 14-hour-no-break shifts at the hospital with very intense precautions. As hard as everyone tried to enforce the aforementioned precautions, my sister still managed to contract the virus during lockdown and had to stay locked away in her room for a week, with no contact with the people closest to her. It's heart-breaking and depressing to watch people around you - people who have helped you vastly with your own emotional issues - turn into fatigue-ridden zombies who do nothing but work and have to use their days off to recover mentally from everything that happens in the hospital. Of course, my family is fine now. My mother is back at work, my cousins are doing well, and my sister fought her COVID and is now back to her usual self at work. It's so important that everyone plays their part in the battle against COVID. Of course, the virus is a physical one, but evidently it is also a mental one. One that fills the mind with stress, anxiety and has the capability to destroy. So, wear your masks, use your hand sanitiser and keep your distance from others. You have the capability to prevent harm coming to others. Do your job and play your part. *(By Euan W)*

Spotlight On... Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter is a political movement that, contrary to popular belief, did not start in the Summer of 2020. Black lives have always mattered- some of us have only just caught up with that. "But all lives matter!" I hear you cry. True. Refugees who wash up on our shores- their lives matter. So do those of homeless people, Muslims, Jews, disabled people, every other ethnic minority: but if you, as a white person, protest that All Lives Matter whenever a black person raises their voice against the system, then you are not really of the belief that All Lives Matter. You just want centre stage, spotlight on you. Because in reality, white, heterosexual men have ruled over everyone else for at least the last ten thousand years. It's time for a change. We want levelled power, equality, justice and safety for all. Right now, Black people are raising their voices and we need to listen. They are tired of the racism installed in our society, they are exhausted by having to work harder to get the same opportunities as a white person, they are traumatised by the news of yet another person of colour being murdered in cold blood. No more. No freedom until we're equal. No justice, no peace. *(By Grace M)*

Outdoor P.E

With the Covid-19 protection measures which have been put in place across the school, many departments are having to find new ways to deliver their subjects to students. The PE department, especially, has been affected, as they are currently unable to carry out any practical PE indoors. This measure has resulted in PE classes being taken outside into the fresh air for activities such as football, rounders and



FITNESS CIRCUITS - HIGHER PUPILS

walks around the park, through all the extremes of our glorious Scottish summertime. The PE department is extremely grateful for the positive attitude and understanding of students and the community, who has been welcoming and accommodating to the classes using the John Hastie and the park. Let's enjoy this opportunity to spend some time experiencing the Scottish climate for the moment! *(By Aoibhinn M)*

Note from the Editors

On behalf of the S6 Communications Team, we hope you enjoy the first issue this session of the School Newsletter. We look forward to publishing more throughout the academic year. This has been a 'Special Edition' to promote pupil voice in this challenging time of the global pandemic. *(Aoibhinn, Eidane Ellie, Euan, Evan and Grace)*



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