

Dear Parent/Guardian

As this most extraordinary year draws to a close, I would like to say an enormous thank you to pupils, staff, parents and governors for their resilience and support in the most challenging of times. I struggle to express how proud I am of the whole school community, and I am sure that we are all ready for some rest and recuperation over the summer, before returning to school full-time in September, which we are looking forward to enormously. I have written separately regarding this.

Sadly, we need to say goodbye to some staff who are leaving TWGGGS this year. Miss Kirkby has taught PE with such talent and enthusiasm for the past year, and we are sad that she is returning back to teach near to her home on the Wirral. Mrs Lee-Grey has inspired many of you in Drama this year, whilst covering Mrs Davis' maternity leave, and we are delighted that she has secured a position at a local school. Mrs D Thomas, who has been on maternity leave, is also moving to teach Technology part-time at a school nearer to her home; she joined TWGGGS five years ago and has inspired many of you with her Food Technology lessons. We wish them all every happiness in their new roles.

I am delighted to let you know that from September Mrs K Smith has been appointed Assistant Director of Achievement Sixth Form, a role in which I know she will excel; and Mrs Sanderson joins Mrs Wheeler as Joint Teachers in Charge of German; whilst Mrs Manktelow assumes responsibility for Health and Safety alongside her role as Physics Technician. We are delighted that Mrs Twaites is staying at TWGGGS as Cover Supervisor, and that Ms Hundal and Mrs Calloway both now have permanent part-time posts at TWGGGS teaching Technology. Mrs Davis has just returned from maternity leave; and Mrs Burleigh is moving from her role as Cover Supervisor to train as a Spanish teacher at TWGGGS. We wish them all well and are very pleased to be working with them.

Freya Ridge, 11T – Mrs Wybar

In early July, Freya entered the English Schools Virtual Athletics competition and came first in the High Jump for intermediate girls, with a personal best of 1.63m, which is an outstanding achievement. She has also been invited by British Athletics to apply for their youth talent programme over the next 2 years; we have our fingers tightly crossed that she will be successful. Many congratulations Freya.

Maisie Buss Ballet Success – Mrs Wybar

Congratulations to Maisie Buss 8T who was one of just six dancers who made it through to the finals at the Royal Ballet School, and she has since been offered a place on their prestigious Saturday School in Covent Garden. We are very proud of Maisie's achievements and we wish her all the best with her training!

Music

Over the last few weeks the music department have been putting together Mrs Waddington's original song 'Together Again' as a virtual performance. Years 7 and 8 were invited to submit recordings as part of their 'creative days', with older pupils and staff also contributing to the project. We are thrilled to announce that the final performance will be available to view on the school website. For the safety of pupils and staff however, please only share this with family and friends. We hope that everyone who took part will be pleased with the final results. We've certainly enjoyed making music again and we are very grateful to everyone who took part.

Sports Day - Mrs Haskett

On Tuesday 14th July the school celebrated sports day in a very different way. Pupils in KS3 participated in the school's first virtual sports day! The PE department was thrilled to see so many pupils take part and compete in a number of events in and around their homes. Sports day marks a celebration of personal achievements within sport and physical activity, and so pupils should be congratulated not only on their performances on sports day, but also on their progress and commitment throughout the whole year.

In terms of the results, it was very close between S, I and W; there were just 300 points between them. T and G shot ahead with G reaching victory and scoring an amazing 6190 points. Congratulations G!

Results:

5th place: S - 4270 points

4th place: I - 4375 points
3rd place: W - 4570 points
2nd place: T - 5185 points
1st place: G - 6190 points

There is a fabulous film of a virtual staff relay race, which was shared with pupils too. We hope that your child enjoyed the day and thank you for supporting the event. We encourage pupils to remain active throughout the summer holidays and we cannot wait to see them in September!

TWGGGS Writers Win National Competition! – Ms Sanderson

When renowned author Nicola Morgan launched her Antiviral Creative Writing Competition at the beginning of April, I was confident that some of our pupils would enjoy taking part, however I am delighted to share with you the wonderful news that TWGGGS pupils have won three of the seven individual prizes and have also made the Highly Commended list.

Congratulations to Holly Dye 7I and Caitlin Taylor 9W (Younger Category Joint Winners), Sammy Steven L6S (Older Category Runner Up), and Mahzabin Ahmed 8G (Younger Category Highly Commended) for their brilliant, thought provoking entries, and to everyone who entered from TWGGGS. As you can see from the winning poem and short stories below, the standard in this national competition was exceptionally high and although not every entry could win a prize, Dr Blanch and I were incredibly impressed by all of the TWGGGS entries and the way they each offered a unique perspective of a very unusual time in our lives. The three winners will each receive three of Nicola's books and the school will receive a selection of Nicola's books and a visit from Nicola herself.

I am thrilled to share with you a quotation from Nicola's website nicolamorgan.com:

Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School – This school is a winner for the incredible overall standard of the entries, as well as the fact that they won three of the seven individual prizes. I was struck by both the writing competence and the creative originality of all their entries, even the ones not mentioned on the Highly Commended list. I'm pretty sure that they not only have an inspiring English department but also, perhaps even more important, they are a keen reading school. You can't be a good writer without being a reader.

Love in the time of corona by Holly Dye

Love comes in many forms. That was what the man was thinking, when the phone call came. At the time he had just returned from work and was thinking. About love and lockdown and his Mother. After her diagnosis, he had been thinking a lot about his Mother. And then the phone rang.

It was a brief call, it had no need to be long: dear Mr Cobbs, we are sorry, but your mother is old and we don't think she'll survive covid-19. And he stayed professional throughout it because there was nothing he could do. Crying wouldn't help anyone. So Cobbs went up to his bedroom, laid down on his bed, and cried anyway.

There, in a hospital on the other side of town, a woman pulled a bicycle helmet on top of her headscarf and started cycling home. Aneria was glad her shift had ended. She hated breaking horrible news like that to people. She wondered what Cobbs must be feeling right now. Over the phone, it felt so impersonal. Impersonal... There were so few people on the streets now. No cars on the road, no-one on the pathways she cycled by. Now useless Street Lamps illuminated nothing. She pulled up to her apartment. So few people...

"Hey gal!"

Aneria was wrapped up in a grateful kiss. Almost no-one there, except her girlfriend.

The next morning, in the apartment next door, a young doctor drove his way down to his workplace and settled down in his office. A few moments later, a young boy ran in. the boy's name was Alfred Jones-a perfectly fine 6 year old, with no health complications other than type one diabetes. It wasn't fair, as our doctor knew. Alfie never did anything to deserve it. So he did the check up, and sighed with relief as his sister came down to take him home. He no longer had to see the optimism on the little boy's face.

Katrina took her brother Alfie home. He was so happy and smiley, no idea of the fact he was in the danger zone. No idea about how possible it was for him to die. And so they got home, and her mother made a joke, and Alfie laughed. Still smiling, she logged onto her virtual dance lesson.

In a small village nearby, a dance teacher taught the steps of a new routine over video. However, her mind was far from dance as she spun. Her mother was in a home-she feared what would happen if the virus got in. so she called her as soon as the lesson ended. All they talked about was an interview; conducted by a man currently crying over news given by a woman next door to a doctor who knew a young boy whose sister was practicing her dance. Love comes in many forms. Love for a mother, a woman, a boy and back to a mother. Love- in the time of corona.

Small Kindnesses by Caitlin Taylor

First, I remove the visor, pulling it off with anger. Next, the mask. It catches on my nose and I struggle for a moment, until it slips over my head, red lines on my face from where it's been gripping me. Then the gloves, and the gown. I fumble with the knot, my fingers tired and careless. After that, the cap, and finally a second pair of gloves. I breathe again - no more lives to save today. I nod at my colleagues. Many of them are facing extra night shifts, hours of long arduous work, yet I'm almost jealous. My work is all-consuming to me, so intensely important that I'm never quite ready for it to end.

I pass a friend in the hallway, he cracks a joke, and we laugh together. It feels almost normal. I look at my watch, apologise and rush off, thinking of my train. I catch it just in time, and sink into a seat, sighing. The normally packed train is painfully empty; just me and a middle-aged woman a few rows back. She notices the NHS badge hanging out of my rucksack, and leans forward. I instinctively flinch away, nervous of getting too close. She probably isn't infectious, but I'm surrounded by illness every day. She understands my gesture, and retreats.

"I just wanted to say thank you." She says. "My father caught it last month and I- it's thanks to people like you that he's still here." I smile, unsure of how to respond. She stands up to leave, and I wish I had said thank you.

I get off at the next stop, and walk through the park home, navigating around the families and elderly couples I pass by. I feel tainted, dangerous, wishing I could protect them from me and potential infection. Even so, I cautiously begin to enjoy myself, noticing springtime changes. I see the blackbird family in the oak tree, and the bluebells pushing past the grass to reach the sun, and the colour of the sky. When I reach my street, a child is drawing a rainbow in chalk on the pavement. I unlock the door to my flat, glad to have a place of my own to go back to, even without the company of friends and family. Bixie the cat rubs up against my ankles; I feel a little less alone. Once she's fed, I make myself a plate of scrambled eggs on toast, only now realising how hungry I am. Mum calls, as she always does at this time. She says she's fine, and then asks about me. If I'm being careful, if I'm eating properly, if I'm lonely. I affirm the first two, but pause after her final question. It's only then that I think to check the time; Thursday, 8pm. I hesitate, listening, and hear applause, gentle at first, then louder. Bixie mews along with them, and I find my answer.

"I'm okay."

My letter of hope by Mahzabin Ahmed

To whoever reads this,

Hello. I am a 24-year-old woman, writing a letter in April 2020. Out of hope. Just hope. Maybe false hope. You probably won't be able to reply to this letter. By the time someone finds this, I might be long dead. I just want you to know what the world is currently like. I wish I could know what the world is like in your time. 10, 20 or 50 years into the future. I wish to know if there is hope for a future generation.

Tell me. Can you feel the rain falling on your face? Can you breathe in that refreshing autumn breeze, or feel the cold of white snow against your skin in winter, or even feel the heat radiating from the sun in summer? Do you get to go to school, or a workplace every morning? Visit relatives and friends on weekends and holidays? Can you...hug? Shake hands? Can you be closer than 5 or 6 feet apart? I hope you can. I hope things have changed. I hope the human race still exists. Why? Because right now, I can do none of those things.

I feel trapped inside the four walls of my house. Trapped like a parakeet in a cage. Why, you ask? This year, 2020, something unendurable has taken place. A pandemic. Spreading all across the globe, affecting every continent but Antarctica. A deadly, treacherous, contagious virus. COVID-19. Hundreds and thousands of innocent beings, dropping dead. Loved ones, sick, dying and suddenly gone. And we can't go out to see them. We can't, no matter how much it breaks our hearts, we can't visit them and we can't see them for the last time. Because by doing that, we put ourselves at risk from the same fate. Family, people you have spent your lifetime with, and they're dead, gone like dust blown by the wind. Just like that. Coronavirus isn't the flu. No, it is more than just an illness. It's a serial killer, a murderer. Coronavirus has left families broken, bereft and desperate. It has left the world desperate. Some think the population will go drastically down. Extinction. Since when was human extinction ever something we had to worry about? But now it is.

Everyone wants to enjoy the sunshine. Everyone wants to breathe in fresh air. But we don't. We do everything in our power to resist that urge because the action of one affect many. Viruses spread rapidly over large distances at a rate you could never imagine. Going outside puts others at risk. The elderly. The weak, the ones with lung diseases, heart diseases. Those with weak immune systems. They are vulnerable. They could die. Because they're not as strong enough to fight it. No, this is not a pandemic. It's a world war no army knows how to fight. Guns, bombs - they are useless against something like this. World lockdown, quarantine. It's the only weapon we have. The only hope of saving the world.

For you by Sammy Steven

You, my little munchkin
It will be very soon
That we're sipping on gin
Under the moon

You, my special man
It won't be long
Until our toes are in the sand
And you're singing me your song

You, my Mr Right
Step down from that ridge
We can hug oh so tight
From up on our bridge

You, my only lover
Listening to your story of outer space
It is with you that I will discover
My favourite happy place

You, my human pillow
We can picnic in the afternoon sun
Underneath the willow
Laughing, joking and having fun

You, my better part
I love you to Phobos and back
You and I on the love cart
Keeping each other on track

Key Stage 3 digital Art exhibition – Mrs Woods

Our Key Stage 3 Art pupils have been able to access Tate Britain in lockdown thanks to one of the programmes in the BBC 'Museums in Quarantine' series. Pupils were pleasantly surprised by their visual tour and commentary which gave them insight into the meaning behind the artwork and encouraged them to consider ways to

compare it to their current experience of lockdown. Pupils chose an artwork that inspired them the most and created a personal, visual response during Home Learning and Art Activity Day. Their annotations evidence their deep thinking and creative problem-solving. We are so very impressed. With so many successful and well-informed responses submitted by KS3, we are delighted to share the work on the school website - <https://www.twggs.kent.sch.uk/508/news/post/51/ks3-art-inspired-by-tate-britain-in-lockdown>

Celebration of Home Learning Years 7 and 8

Towards the end of a highly unusual, and sometimes challenging, term, pupils in Years 7 and 8 were invited to step away from their screens to bring some variety to their home studies. Over the course of two days in July, activities were selected from a whole range of ideas supplied by different subject departments, with many of the prompts focusing on getting outdoors and having fun. Not every activity required pupils to upload work, but all were invited to share photos or snippets of what they had chosen to do. Some of these are available to view on the school website; we are very proud of what they all achieved, away from a computer screen and working independently. <https://www.twggs.kent.sch.uk/1330/celebrating-home-learning-in-years-7-8>

Carnegie Book Group – Ms Sanderson

Thank you to all of the pupils who have taken part in the Carnegie Book Group, via Google Classroom, this year. It has been wonderful to be able to chat with you all about the Carnegie Shortlisted books and to hear about what else you have been reading recently. I have loved reading all of your book recommendation posts and my 'to be read' pile of books has grown immensely.

Although the judges' Carnegie Medal winner has already been announced – *Lark* by Anthony McGowan – the all-important Shadower's Choice award will not be announced until October so there is still plenty of time for you to get reading and join in! You will be able to vote for your favourite Carnegie shortlisted book via carnegiegreenaway.org.uk from September.

The Carnegie Book Group Google Classroom will be available for pupils to post comments and share book recommendations over the summer holidays so if your child has not already signed up and you would like them to take part then please email me before the end of the day on Wednesday 22nd July on library@twggs.kent.sch.uk. The Page Turners Book Group (formerly SESTBA) will return, in one form or another, in October!

My time in TWGGS CCF – Squadron Sergeant Major Martha Rigby

My time in TWGGS CCF has spanned from year 9 to the rather abrupt end of year 13. Looking back, it has most definitely been one of the best things I could have been part of in school. One of the most important things I can take away from CCF is the many life skills it allows you to develop: leadership, discipline and self-confidence to name a few. From giving talks to large numbers of people to leading a platoon of cadets I'd just met, these challenging tasks are what I think makes CCF such a unique opportunity and so important to the growth of TWGGS girls.

Also, my time in CCF has given me some of my favourite memories. I have had the chance to do all sorts of adventurous training from skiing to sea kayaking, met friends from all over the UK, take part in a range of competitions- many of which we won, and attend countless demanding but very rewarding camps. It's these camps which can, from the outside, seem like the last thing you'd want to do on a weekend- with early mornings and exhausting days- that were my favourite part. The feeling of coming home on a Sunday afternoon completely worn out but knowing all you had achieved over the past two days was always most rewarding.

As a naturally competitive person, the many competitions within CCF formed an important part of my time in it as well. Whether they were between sections on a camp, platoons in a drill competition or between schools, working together as a team towards a specific goal and doing your best was always so fulfilling. I had the chance to be part of the Cambrian Patrol team, meaning we prepared for months for the hardest and most physically demanding competition in cadets. Whilst coming first in it last year was amazing, this year when it was cancelled two weeks prior due to coronavirus, I could still be so proud of all we'd done in preparation.

Through camps and our weekly parades afterschool, I got to know many other pupils at TWGGS, in years both above and below me, which is something I would never have done otherwise. Unlike nearly all things you do in school,

within CCF all years are alongside each other but often in different roles, with older girls leading. This meant that especially when I first joined I was able to have such inspiring senior cadets as role models. I started off as a keen but nervous cadet and, as I had been in CCF for longer, I moved from struggling to learn the basics myself to teaching the younger cadets. The independence and self-confidence I've acquired through being pushed outside my comfort zone throughout my time in CCF are invaluable. Knowing how much I'd gained from it made being able to help other girls do the same so special and it has truly been a privilege to be part of TWGGS CCF.

My time in TWGGS CCF - RSM Tabitha Preston

I feel extremely privileged to have spent the last 5 years as a member of TWGGS CCF. Here's a bit on my time in CCF...

I joined in Year 9 for reasons similar to many others: it sounded fun, the uniform looked cool and I rightly thought it meant more time outside. It was after my first Annual Camp (Penally 2016) that I realised that CCF was something I loved. We'd been thrown right into it with a demanding exercise, rigorous weapons testing and cleaning, on top of being the youngest year to go on an annual camp. Other things packed in the week included abseiling, range days, drill competition, playing Ninja as the sun set, watching the football, not to mention being eaten alive by mosquitoes in an ambush and never fitting in the portaloos because we were so kitted up! I realised that CCF was busy and highly entertaining due to the random mix of cadets.

Other standout memories include: Remembrance Parade every year - it always has an immense sense of pride and unity; regional and national competitions - again pride, but also many laughs because someone always falls over at the perfect time; inter-contingent drill competitions - endless lunchtime rehearsals and section bonding; parachuting - just an incredible experience; and external opportunities such as the Master Cadet course, where I met many other cadets and found out I could survive three days with only 4 hours sleep each night.

What makes CCF though isn't just the fantastic opportunities available, it's the cadets and officers in the unit. The relationships you have with older and younger cadets is unique and something you could never get from any other part of school life. There's no other time when I've spent hours being cold, tired, and soggy with someone else, and still found plenty of things to laugh about. There are situations where you know a younger cadet has your back, or when you have to put your trust into another cadet you barely know. Throughout CCF I've had many moments of utter admiration at other girls - both of higher and lower ranks, purely because of the grit and determination they've shown to support the team. A team of TWGGS CCF girls can be absolutely unstoppable.

Our officers, especially Major Reynolds, go above and beyond to give us so many opportunities throughout the year. None of the things that we've achieved in the last few years would have been possible without their selfless commitment.

In terms of what I've gained from CCF, on top of practical skills and good friends, the big one is confidence. I've learned that it's extremely difficult to be a solid leader or even a team member if you don't believe in yourself. I know that many girls come out of CCF feeling more confident than before which is extremely valuable. I will take these lessons as I hopefully study medicine next year with the aim of becoming a doctor. Being from TWGGS CCF does mean there can be pressure at times and a high standard to meet. Our unit is the largest all female state school voluntary CCF and we are well known among other cadet units nationally. As such, we are representing many things more than we realise and other units aspire to emulate us.

My advice for other cadets is to give it 100% as it's an opportunity you'll never get again. Although it's easy for me to say, no matter your rank, you still have the ability to inspire others and thrive in whatever your role may be in a section or on a camp. You may not realise the positive impact you can have on other people, which makes it worth putting so much of yourself into it. Being in CCF has been the highlight of my TWGGS career and it has been an absolute privilege to have been RSM to such a wonderful group of cadets.

My time in TWGGS CCF – Leading Hand Katie-Anne Costello

Like most year 9s, when signing up to join CCF, I was just looking for something new and exciting to get involved with. Little did I know that I would become one of the first ever TWGGS cadets to join the brand new naval section and, in what felt like a blink of an eye, becoming a senior₆ of that very same section. When looking back at all of the

time I have spent in the CCF over the past five years, I immediately look to the multiple camps and courses I was lucky enough to attend. From flying a Tutor aircraft to achieving my level 3 sailing qualification, I have gained so many experiences and skills I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

One of my favourite camps has to be the Navy's annual summer camp in which we had the opportunity to either sail a 40ft yacht or drive a power boat from Portsmouth to the Isle of White. During the week, we lived on the boats, including sleeping, cooking and playing many card games. I remember, specifically one evening, after we had finished cooking our dinner, sitting on the deck of one of the power boats seeing something moving in the water. It didn't take us long to figure out what this mysterious creature was as it came up to the surface to say 'Hello!'. Right there in the harbour, next to our boat was a dolphin, a very friendly dolphin I might add, as it continued to follow one of our boats the next morning being thoroughly entertained by the bubbles created in the water.

I could probably write forever about the challenges I came across in those five years and how I overcame them. I could also, without doubt, write a book on the many camps, courses and adventures I have experienced in that time. But, for me, what made my time in the Navy section unforgettable, was the people. From my fellow cadets, within the Navy and Army sections, to the Officers, who tirelessly worked to make all of our times in CCF enjoyable and one of a kind. I would especially like to say an enormous thank you to Lt. Fuller and S/Lt. Shrubsole, whom without, my time in the Navy section would not have been the same.

For any TWGGS pupil reading this, whether you are thinking about joining or are already in the CCF, my one piece of advice would be to keep putting yourself out there. I would normally describe myself as a rather shy individual, so I know how hard it can be to be loud and vulnerable, but my time in the CCF really helped to bring me out of my shell and get involved in so many wonderful opportunities I will cherish for the rest of my life.



Water Safety – Miss Parkinson

We have been asked to share this important message about water safety from the RNLI.

This summer, our Lifeguards cannot be on every beach, meaning a heightened water safety risk to beach goers. We have already seen the influx of beach goers in the past few weeks after some of the restrictions were lifted and the summer weather arrived. In a normal year the RNLI alongside other water safety partners helps thousands of people who end up getting into difficulty in or close to the water when doing these types of activities.

Throughout the summer term, our local team of trained volunteers and Lifeguards do their best to visit as many of the schools, colleges and youth groups in our region as possible. However, due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak we have not been able to engage with school communities as we normally would in the South East. We would be grateful if you could take some time to look at the Water Safety Home Resources.

Educating young people about how to keep safe, in on and around water is fundamental to saving lives at sea and a core part of the RNLI's water safety activity. The RNLI have put together two downloadable packs of resources focusing on keeping safe this summer. Please visit the RNLI website [rnli.org/safety/beach-safety](https://www.rnli.org/safety/beach-safety) to see the Beach Safety Campaign and beach safety resources.

I would like to thank you for helping to spread the water safety message, as we need to help keep young people safe at the beach.

With very warmest wishes to you all,

Linda Wybar.

Mrs L Wybar, Headteacher