



# NEWSLETTER

Spring HT1

1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

## Headteacher's Message

Dear parents and carers,

In this week's edition we share some fantastic examples of home learning from across the school, including colourful presentations created by pupils for Energy Saving Week 2021.

Activities are in full swing for LGBT+ month with an exciting badge making competition for pupils to show off their creativity! Read on to find out more...

Today marks the beginning of Children's Mental Health Week, a time dedicated to shining the spotlight on the importance of young people's mental health. Following on this theme, we are excited to announce that we are holding our first of it's kind Dean Trust Ardwick Wellbeing Wednesday. You will find more information on this important week inside.

During these times it is vital that pupils still have access to the wider curriculum. A recent example of this was the activities that took place for Holocaust Memorial Day. Pupils discussed the importance of the day during their PSHE lessons and were introduced to @Eva.Stories, a modern way of showing the reality of the holocaust.

The first form council of the year will take place this Friday and will be held virtually through the form council forum. Pupils should see their Head of Year or Form Tutor for more information.

I look forward to seeing you online this Wednesday for our virtual remote guidance meeting in which we will be offering you guidance and further information on home learning. Please refer to the text that was sent out for more information.

Stay safe and best wishes,

Mrs. S. Finlay



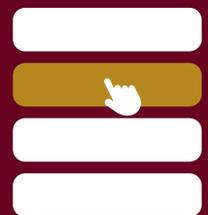
Ms S. Finlay  
Headteacher

**Safeguarding Tip:** School have sent a text out with a link to a pupil support survey – please complete this to help us best support your child.

## Year 9 Options Information

If your child is in Year 9, please visit our website to view important information on Year 9 Options.

[www.deantrustardwick.co.uk/year-9-options](http://www.deantrustardwick.co.uk/year-9-options)



## Year 10 Post-16 Applications Advice

Please visit our website to watch our videos for guidance on exploring Post-16 opportunities and making applications.

<https://www.deantrustardwick.co.uk/year-10-post-16-applications-advice/>

16  
Post





**Year 7 - Mrs Rashford** *I ask that you contact the school to discuss any barriers to learning.*

We have now been delivering remote learning for four weeks and we are increasingly impressed by the enthusiasm, and engagement, that many of our pupils are demonstrating. I would love to see some photos of any activities Year 7 pupils complete. They can post them on our the Proud to Belong Work Showcase found on Google Classroom, code: a5lnx44. The best examples of work will be included in this weekly newsletter! Communication is key to ensuring that our pupils are in receipt of the absolute best provision during these difficult times. There may be challenges in accessing the provision and I ask that you contact the school to discuss any barriers to learning. Take care and stay safe.



**Year 8 - Mr Diaz** *Whilst working from home, it is vital that the necessary breaks are taken.*

We have had an increase of pupils logging onto Google Classroom and completing their work, from a 65% at the start of the term to almost 80% of Year 8 now engaging with their work. This is something to be celebrated and I urge you to continue to encourage your child to engage with their online learning whilst working from home. It is vital that the necessary breaks are taken, however, we don't expect pupils to be sat in front of a device for hours on end as this would not be healthy. Please schedule in breaks and active tasks for your child to engage in and manage their day. We have also had several pupils engage with the Energy Savings competition, winners will be announced soon, watch this space!



**Year 9 - Mr Chetwyn** *I want to take this opportunity to showcase some positive messages for Year 9.*

9D4 had the best English lesson ever. They were working at improving their analytical work comparing Lady Macbeth's character at the beginning and end of the play. Every single pupil (except Ahmed Alim) scored a BFL1 and produced outstanding work! Top drawer! - *Mr Hull*

9T2 have produced some excellent work and focus from all, with special mentions to Ferdous, Foysal, Faizan, Aghogogo, Allah-Yar, Haniya and Bushra for their contributions to class discussions - *Ms Williams*

9D3 all worked amazingly well on Friday producing fantastic essays on the opportunities in the Thar Desert, absolute legends - *Miss Ribbands*



**Year 10 - Mr Hull** *Please continue to maintain a healthy routine of completing your work.*

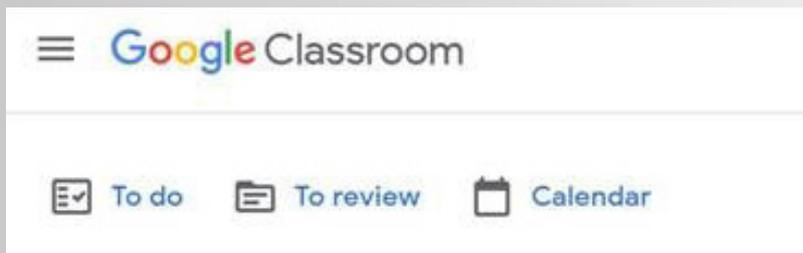
Hi Year 10. There has been so much positivity from your teachers and recognition of the superb work that many of our pupils are completing remotely. As we look into the future, which we all hope will bring a swift return to school, we need to think about some of the important events and milestones that happen in Year 10. In the coming weeks, we are going to be providing you with a great deal of exciting information about your post-16 options. I know several of you will have clear ideas about what you want for the future, and some of you will have no idea. Both are entirely normal, but we want to work with you to work out what is best for you. These details will be on the school website and Google Classroom soon. Please continue to maintain a healthy routine of completing your work and taking regular breaks to refresh you mentally and physically. Work hard, be kind.



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

### Top Tip for Parents and Carers | Accessing your child's work easily

Click on the 'Calendar' on the top left of your child's Google Classroom to see all work scheduled for that day.



### Important Information for Parents and Carers

The remote education information for parents has been added to the website and can be found via the link below:

[www.deantrustardwick.co.uk/remote-learning](http://www.deantrustardwick.co.uk/remote-learning)

### Please welcome our new Careers Advisor

Hello, my name is Victoria Orosun and I am a qualified Career Advisor. I have BSc (Hons) degree in information technology and education and post graduate diploma in career guidance.

I have been working with young people for over twenty years in various education establishment, schools, colleges and Connexions as personal advisor and career advisor providing one-to-one interviews and facilitating group work to young people. I have organised various careers events whereby young people can meet with employers from different organisation to find out about careers opportunity.

I am your new career advisor and I will be providing you information, advice and guidance on choosing options and future careers. I will provide you with accurate and up-to-date careers information. I have a very good working relationship with young people, as well as working within a team.

I am a non-judgemental person that works within the code of ethics of my job as a career advisor.

As your Careers Advisor I will help your child to:

- Identify personal qualities and skills
- Identify the skills they would like to develop
- Explore their interests
- Come up with ideas for study and work
- Explore specific career areas open to them
- Explore labour market information
- Complete college application forms and personal statements
- Find out about 6th Form and College Courses, Training, Work or Apprenticeships
- Find out about different qualifications levels and progression route into different professions
- Explore current and future jobs opportunities

I will be organising appointments with Year 10 pupils from this week so please watch out for text messages and emails with information about appointment times and dates.

### Manchester Mind: Access help and advice

Manchester Mind have an amazing service which includes advice for housing debts and benefits, a virtual 'Wellbeing Café' on Tuesday evenings and a 'Listening Ear' service. These can all be found on their website:

<https://www.manchestermind.org/our-services/cyp/>

They do also have a counselling service, however the waiting list for this is currently very long as their team is only small.



Call us on: 0161 769 5132



@DT\_Ardwick

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## SCHOOL MESSAGES

### Form Council Meeting - Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February, 9.00am

This week we will be reconnecting with each other virtually through our form council forum. Each form will be organising a virtual way to communicate and have our usual debates and discussions regarding a topic that is relevant to pupils, their form, and their year group. As we have now been away from school for several weeks, we are very much looking forward to meet for our school council activities. Please see your HoY / Form group Google Classroom for further info! Don't forget, 9:00 am on Friday 5th February.



### Children's Mental Health Week 2021

This week sees the start of Children's Mental Health Week and the theme is 'Express Yourself'. Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself. We know that times are tough for all at the moment, but even more so for our children and young people. As a parent it is often difficult to know how to help and support. You can get some hints and tips from the resource below, plus you can always contact the school for further advice.

This week, there will be a whole host of activities, assemblies, videos you can access on our Google Classrooms.

The following week we will be hosting our very first Dean Trust Ardwick #wellbeingwednesday. More details will be released soon!

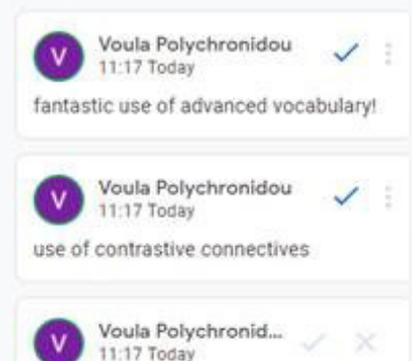


### English

Zoha, 7T3 has gone above and beyond in producing a comparative paragraph of 2 texts. She successfully completed the gap-filling task set by the teacher, but then created another paragraph on her own using advanced vocabulary, contrastive connectives and accurate quotes from the text to express her opinion! Very well done!

In the **Modern** extract, Younis has more options for fun available to her. She states that she has **I have given all my toys away** and that she is "too old **to play with dolls**." In **contrast** to this, in the Victorian extract, Wren is desperate to receive "a **bag of marbles**", because his mother has told him that he "might **get a present** if he **is really good**." From this, we can infer that Younis has more access to **consumer goods** and a better **quality of life**.

On the other hand, Younis, like many others in the modern era, is embedded in technology, and though she claims to like the outside better She also, **explicitly stated** "...Mini-clip for an hour each day" this is 'obviously' proves that she does go on the internet and quite a lot actually. **Whereas, even though** Wren does not get the hourly bliss of the internet, he has something much more fun to look forward to, I mean who doesn't love to hang out with their friends and play? And get an amazing board game out of it! this was clearly stated by Wren in the short text to follow: "Ma says if i'm really good I might get a present... I'm going... to the common this afternoon... and have some snowball fights from the kids from St Nicholas." From what the two have stated I can tell that they both have a great time, **but** Wren clearly has more, this is confirmed from the fact I didn't have much to say for Younis, but I have lots of points for Wren, **and** I still think I have more!



Zoha, Year 7 - Advanced writing work.



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## Design and Technology

This week Year 9 have been researching ergonomics and anthropometrics. They have looked at how an understanding of these can help improve products for the better, and optimise them for human use. We are delighted with the work Year 9 have produced and it has been great to see they have produced a detailed and thorough investigation. Year 10s have been carrying out research tasks into the different types of plastics and processes used to shape and form plastics into products. After their research they have gone onto producing some fantastic visual revision resources!

Design & Technology Remote Learning Work

**Task Extended - WRITE YOUR ANSWERS IN GREEN FONT**

Name	Head Length	Hand Width
Person A (Male)	20.5	8
Person B (M)	20.5	8
Person C (M)	21	9
Person D (M)	20	8
Person E (M)	20.5	8
Person F (M)	20	8
Person G (M)	20	8
Person H (M)	20	8
Person I (M)	20	8
Person J (M)	20	8
Person K (M)	20	8
Person L (M)	20	8
Person M (M)	20	8
Person N (M)	20	8
Person O (M)	20	8
Person P (M)	20	8
Person Q (M)	20	8
Person R (M)	20	8
Person S (M)	20	8
Person T (M)	20	8
Person U (M)	20	8
Person V (M)	20	8
Person W (M)	20	8
Person X (M)	20	8
Person Y (M)	20	8
Person Z (M)	20	8

Use an A4 sheet as you can use the back, but don't worry if you can't fit them all!

- How do anthropometrics and ergonomics link together? Ergonomics use anthropometrics to find average sizes so these products are available for as many customers.
- What is meant by 50<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles? Different anthropometric ranges: the 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles are the average, e.g. 100cm and 160cm, while the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile is where most people fit into similar to the average.
- For what reason do you think designers use the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile when designing things such as door handles or emergency stop buttons? Since most people grow taller, they use the tallest male heights to design the door frame so most everyone can walk through it.
- What is the curve called that graphs and why is it called that? The curve is called the normal distribution curve and it is called that because it represents the distribution of human characteristics.

**Primary Questions**

Use the flow to apply your knowledge to the application questions below. Use the information obtained from the repeated reading and from your answers to the comprehension questions to help you.

- How do designers create comfortable products? They use comfortable material and use the right anthropometrics to give a size fit to those individuals.
- What effect does a comfortable and safe product have on customer and the company who designed it? The customers have a better experience with the product and are more likely to come back meaning more profits for the company selling it.

**Glossary of Key Terms**

Design & Technology Remote Learning Work

**Challenging Question**

How might I consider anthropometric data in the design of a product?

**Do Now Questions: WRITE YOUR ANSWERS IN GREEN FONT**

- Put the words in the correct heading:

Shape	Material	Size	Cost	Aesthetics	Tactile	Thermal	Colour	Accessibility
Ergonomic Features				Not Ergonomic Features				
• Shape	• Material	• Size	• Accessibility	• Cost	• Aesthetics	• Tactile	• Thermal	• Colour

**Task - WRITE YOUR ANSWERS IN GREEN FONT**

- How do designers create comfortable products? They take anthropometric data and create products that will be the average size meaning it is comfortable for a wider range of people.
- What effect does a comfortable and safe product have on customer and the company who designed it? A customer who feels they are going to use it for longer it provides a better experience for them and as the long term customer profits for the company. This is because your brand would spread around and your product name would bring new customers.
- What equipment have you used to create products that will be comfortable to use? Software: I used a 3D printer that got me to see if you comfortably can help you perform better or walk better than in the store when doing it as you going and not about to lose.

What have you got and make please have designed to be comfortable? Your design (our thought use the technology and computer) they include have been made more safe and more safe!

**What anthropometric measurements would you take for the products below?**

Phone	Phone length	Phone width	Phone thickness
• Phone length: to see if it's good for portability in pockets	• Phone width: to see if it's good for portability in pockets	• Phone thickness: to see if it's good for portability in pockets	• Phone weight: to see if it's good for portability in pockets

Headphones	Earpiece size	Headband width	Headband adjustability
• Earpiece size: to see if it fits the ear	• Headband width: to see if it fits the head	• Headband adjustability: to see if it fits the head	• Headband material: to see if it's comfortable

Glasses	Distance between eyes	Distance between eyes and nose	Distance between eyes and ears
• Distance between eyes: to see if it fits the face	• Distance between eyes and nose: to see if it fits the face	• Distance between eyes and ears: to see if it fits the face	• Distance between ears: to see if it fits the face

**Task: make a list**

• Phone length: to see if it's good for portability in pockets  
• Phone width: to see if it's good for portability in pockets  
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Design & Technology Remote Learning Work

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**Task - WRITE YOUR ANSWERS IN GREEN FONT**

- How do designers create comfortable products? They take anthropometric data and create products that will be the average size meaning it is comfortable for a wider range of people.
- What effect does a comfortable and safe product have on customer and the company who designed it? They would use it more, it will appear to them and they will use it for their own benefit!
- What equipment have you used to create products that will be comfortable to use? Very good, and measurement then is average to be comfortable.
- What have you got and make please have designed to be comfortable? My phone is the product to help with the phone, the headphones and the ear buds to help with the phone.

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Examples of Year 9 work on ergonomics and anthropometrics.

Design & Technology - D&T Materials - Remote Learning Work

**Challenging Question: What are the different ways in which plastics can be manufactured?**

**Do Now - Retrieval Questions**

- What is the storage container called that sits on top of the machine that stores the plastic pellets?
- Why does the plastic have to be melted before it is added to the mould?
- How does the pellet storage container (answer 2) know how many plastic pellets to add to the machine?
- Why is the plastic material into the mould? What is the mould made from?

**Important Reading:** Read the information below carefully. Use this information to help you to answer the comprehension questions on the next page.

Blow moulding is a plastics moulding process used in the manufacturing industry to create hollow objects made of plastic, such as bottles. Like other moulding processes, it involves the use of heated, liquid plastic that's forced into a mould cavity (blow/spin) under pressure. Blow moulding is a special type of moulding process where the heated plastic is blown into a mould cavity (blow/spin) to create a hollow object. Blow moulding is only used to create hollow products.

Raw plastic is first heated, after which it's formed into a soft, tube shape (called a parison). Next, the plastic parison is secured to the top of the mold. Finally, air is injected into the mold and blown down onto the plastic parison, where it stretches it across the entire shape of the mould cavity (blow/spin) making the shape of the product.

The terms "blow moulding" and "extrusion moulding" while similar, they aren't the same. Both blow moulding and extrusion moulding involve the use of liquid plastic that's forced into a mould cavity (blow/spin). The difference is that blow moulding is used to create hollow objects, whereas extrusion moulding is used to create solid objects. For hollow objects, only blow moulding offers a fast and effective solution for manufacturing companies. The main applications are bottles, jars and other plastic containers.

After a cooling period the blow mould opens and the finished object is ejected from the mould by an automatic machine that is programmed to remove the parison each time they have been made. This entire process will repeat so that the company can make large numbers of the blow moulded product. This can be used for the process of manufacturing bottles where thousands will need to be made to be kept up with the demand of the product.

Recycling Symbol	Example plastic	Plastics usage
1	High-density polyethylene (HDPE)	Plastics usage: Milk jugs, detergent bottles, etc.
2	High-density polyethylene (HDPE)	Plastics usage: Milk jugs, detergent bottles, etc.
3	Polypropylene (PP)	Plastics usage: Car bumpers, etc.
4	Low-density polyethylene (LDPE)	Plastics usage: Plastic bags, etc.
5	Polyethylene terephthalate (PET)	Plastics usage: Soda bottles, etc.
6	Polyethylene terephthalate (PET)	Plastics usage: Soda bottles, etc.
7	Other plastics with no specific resin and symbols	Plastics usage: Various other plastic products.

Design & Technology - D&T Materials - Remote Learning Work

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Examples of Year 10 work on different types of plastics and their uses.

## LGBT+ History Month

In celebration of LGBT+ History Month, we are holding a badge competition. Pupils have been challenged to design a badge that promotes:

- Inclusivity
- Diversity
- Acceptance
- Being an ally



**MAKE IT POWERFUL - MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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# Energy Saving Week 2021



You may remember reading about Miss Bostock's Energy Saving Week competition in a previous newsletter. Pupils were challenged to get creative by presenting their own ideas for a energy saving invention and discuss current technology already in use. Here are some fantastic examples!

## Solar panels.

The sun shines on the solar panels and the panels absorb the energy, creating direct current (DC) electricity. The electricity is fed into what is called a solar inverter. This converts the current into alternating current. The AC current is then used to power the appliances in your home. Any power that your home does not need gets sent back (or sold) to the National Grid for others to use. Solar panels allow you to save energy, and using energy from the sun.



## Wind turbines.

Wind Energy Is Renewable & Sustainable, It's Good For The Environment, It Reduces Fossil Fuel Consumption, Wind Energy is Free. No money required, Both Industrial & Domestic Wind Turbines Are Available, Wind Energy Can Provide Power to Remote Locations, Wind Technology is Becoming Cheaper, Wind turbines use natural resources and Wind Turbines Are Low Maintenance.



## Solar powered Lights/Lanterns.

Solar energy comes free from the sun which makes it a cheaper alternative, Very simple to install you won't need technical help from third-party installation companies, When it comes to maintenance costs, it is close to zero and very cheap. Most of these lanterns come with automatic on and off sensors that will turn on and off without your intervention. The attractive designs blend so well with modern construction techniques hence adding the beauty.



## Solar powered Phone chargers.

Solar powered phone chargers are low-powered, so they work well as maintenance chargers. A solar battery charger can also be a lifesaver in case of sudden battery discharge. It can help in prolonging the battery life of a stationary vehicle. Solar powered Phone chargers save energy by light, so no electricity is used. Just natural resources! Direct solar chargers connect the solar panels to your phone, so the energy produced by the panels goes directly into your phone's battery. A battery bank solar charger doesn't get hooked up to your phone.



## Ultra-Efficient Heat Pumps.

How Ultra-Efficient Heat Pumps work- A mixture of water and anti-freeze is pumped around the ground loop and absorbs the naturally occurring heat stored in the ground. The water mixture is compressed and goes through a heat exchanger, which extracts the heat and transfers it to the heat pump. The heat is then transferred to your home heating system. Lower Running Costs: Heat pumps are cheaper to run than systems based on combustion. Heat pumps require less maintenance. Heat pumps are safer than combustion-based heating systems. Heat pump system Reduces an efficient conversion rate of energy too, and during the warm periods, heat pumps are able to reverse.



## Beneficial Solar water heating system

A solar water heating system (or solar thermal technology) uses the sun's free, renewable energy to heat water for your home. With every passing year the technology is becoming more effective, more popular and more affordable providing UK homes with an alternative to traditional water heating systems. You get warm water throughout the year. The Solar Water heating system uses (solar thermal collectors). These panels look a lot like solar PV panels and work in a similar way, i.e. they capture energy from the sun, and converting the heat into electricity. Solar thermal collectors use the energy to provide water. No electricity required!



The above work is by Saima. She explains the different types of 'green' energy currently in use around the world, their advantages, and what they can be used to power. Well done!





This invention uses the rain to filter into clean water for around your house like: showers and sinks. This invention also turns the rain water into cold air, and then the air travels through the pipes to our conditioners to keep your house cool. I'M NOT SURE IF THIS IS ALREADY AN INVENTION.

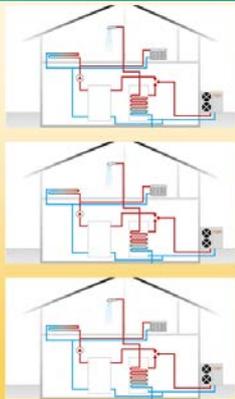
### Mo's Invention

'My invention uses the rainwater from your garden to filter into clean water for around your house like: showers and sinks. My invention also turns the rain water to cold air, and then the air travels through the pipes to air conditioners to keep your house cool. My inspiration came from the one that can generate heat from the ground.'



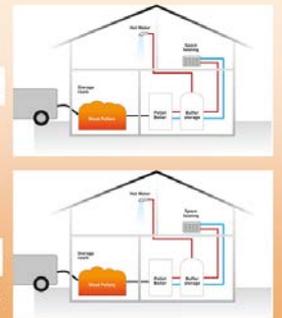
### Air Source Heat

Heat from the air is absorbed at low temperature into a fluid. This fluid passes through a compressor, increasing the temperature, and transfers that higher temperature heat to the heating and hot water circuits of the house. It heats your home as well as your water and lowers your fuel bills. It can be easier to install than a ground source heat pump.



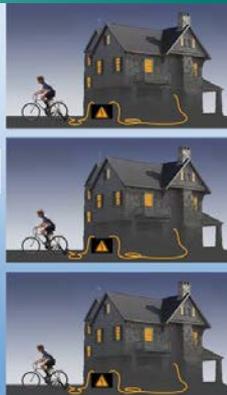
### Biomass Systems

Biomass is a renewable energy source, generated from burning wood, plants and other organic matter, such as manure or household waste. ... Biomass heating systems burn wood pellets, chips or logs to provide warmth in a single room or to power central heating and hot water boilers.



### Save energy

Why don't you save energy and save the world. Turn off all your electronics for the day. Turn off all your power. Why don't you power up your house using a bike. More exercise for you! You generate more energy to use the oven, to warm water for a bath.



### 3D - Printed Solar Energy Trees.

Do you like decorating your house with plants? Do you like to save energy? So how about using 3D Printed Solar Energy Trees. The tiny leaves generate and store solar energy and can be used to power small appliances and mobile devices. If one can do that. Imagine what it would be like having a whole forest of them. We could also 3D print many other stuff and make it so that it also saves energy.



My invention uses the rainwater from your garden to filter into clean water for around your house like: showers and sinks. My invention also turns the rain water to cold air, and then the air travels through the pipes to air conditioners to keep your house cool. My inspiration came from the one that can generate heat from the ground.

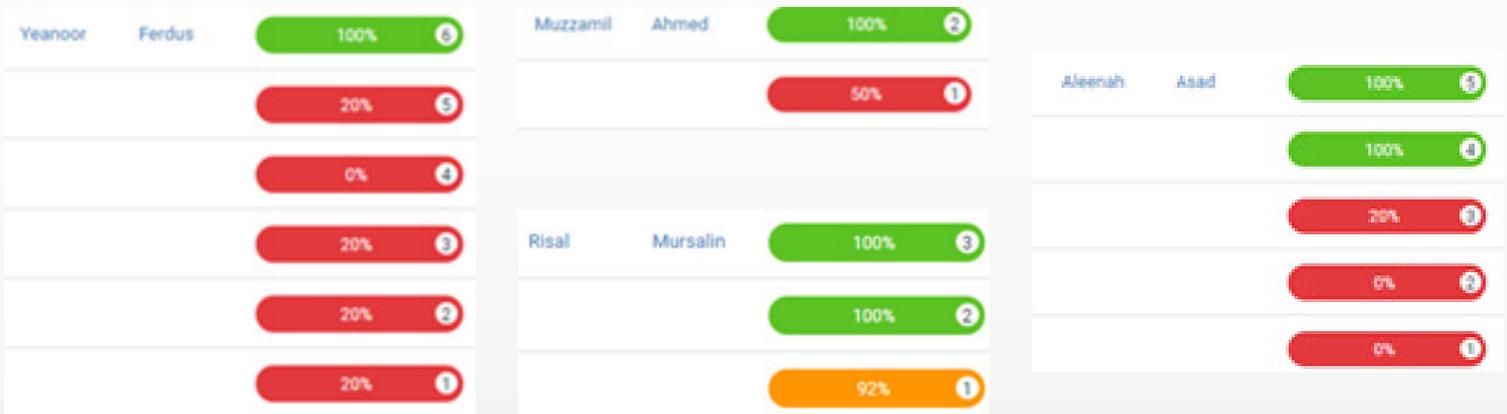


# SCHOOL MESSAGES

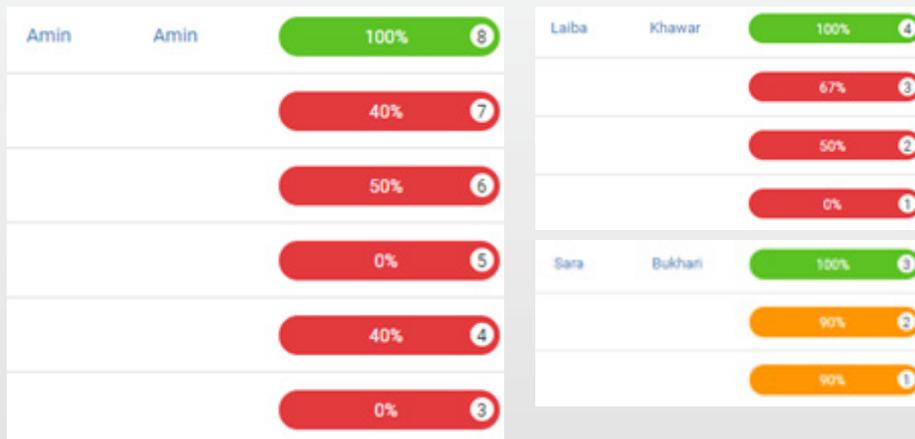
## Mathematics

Each of these pupils have demonstrated their ambition to obtain academic excellence in their refusal to accept anything less than 100%. The images below show how these pupils have persevered with a Hegarty Maths task, repeating it until they scored 100%.

They really do want to become the best mathematician they can be!



## Hegarty Maths Task 8T1



## Hegarty Maths Task 10D2

## BAFTA Kids - Young Presenter and Young Games Designer Competition 2021

Are you ready to enter the BAFTA Kids Young Presenter Competition in partnership with Sky Kids: FYI? The theme this year is 'Express yourself.' To enter, you will need to create a short video telling us all about how you express yourself. You have until Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 6.00pm to create and submit your entry. Watch the video here for some inspiration before you get started! <http://www.baftakids.org/competitions/young-presenter-competition-2021>

Are you thinking about making games when you leave school? Do you have a great game idea you want to share? Then BAFTA's Young Game Designers is for you!

You can enter the competition for a chance to win a BAFTA YGD Award, along with once-in-a-lifetime experiences with top game makers and industry professionals! Find out more information here: <http://ygd.bafta.org>



# HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

# DAY

# 27 JANUARY

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) encourages remembrance in a world scarred by genocide. They promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) – the international day on 27th January to remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, alongside the millions of other people killed under Nazi Persecution and in genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

During their PSHE classes, pupils were introduced to a modern way of showing the reality of the Holocaust in WW2. Pupils were shown a video called 'The Making of Eva's Story' which explains how the Instagram page @eva.stories came about. It uses the Instagram platform, along with actors and realistic sets, to tell the true story of Eva Heyman who started writing a diary on her 13th birthday and chronicled the German invasion of Hungary in 1944. She died in the concentration camps 8 months later. Using hashtags, geotags and emojis it brings a young, modern viewer right to the heart of this part of history. Those with access to Instagram can follow the page @eva.stories.



Pictured: The real Eva Heyman.



You can follow @Eva.Stories.



## What Parents & Carers Need to Know About

# WECHAT



17+  
App Store  
Rating

WeChat is an all-in-one communications app for free text messaging, voice and video calls, photo sharing and games. Additionally, through “mini-programs” (apps integrated into the main WeChat platform), it becomes a one-stop shop by allowing users to do things like send payments, make purchases or book taxis, flights and hotels. Headquartered in Shenzhen, China, WeChat is one of the world’s most popular social media downloads, with around 980 million active users.

### Risky Connections

Users of WeChat can exchange contact info instantly through their own unique QR code. That also means that one quick scan of your child’s QR code would give a person all of their details. Users can also add a person to their WeChat network using just a phone number – and, more worryingly, there’s an option to search specifically for nearby users, utilising their device’s location services.



HEY, WANNA MEET UP THIS SATURDAY?  
#SOCIALDISTANCED

### Age-Inappropriate Activity

Social services in Malaysia (where WeChat is among the top three messaging platforms) have highlighted the app as a conduit for teenagers and schoolchildren to gamble online, arrange sexual hook-ups and deal drugs. WeChat’s age rating is 17+, but this is only an electronic verification: a child could simply lie about their age to download the app and would not have to provide proof.



### Random Contacts

WeChat has a ‘discover users’ mode which allows you to connect with other people – either worldwide or nearby – entirely at random, through the device’s GPS locator. The ‘shake’ facility (i.e. literally shaking the phone) puts you in touch with another user (most likely a stranger) and instantly allows messaging and video contact. For children and young adults, this feature is potentially incredibly dangerous.



### Surveillance Suspicions

Some western journalists have alleged that WeChat is being used on behalf of the Chinese government to mine data, access voicemails and track users’ physical location. The Indian Government banned the app in 2020 over “data and privacy issues”. In the USA, the Government has initiated legal proceedings to block WeChat, citing national security and data privacy concerns.



### Questionable Impartiality

There have been numerous media reports of WeChat blocking or censoring messages because of ‘restricted’ keywords, usually related to politically sensitive subjects (for example, criticism of the Chinese Government’s response to the Covid-19 outbreak). Some people’s accounts have allegedly been disabled because of something comparatively innocuous that they posted. If this is accurate, it raises questions about the reliability and fairness of WeChat’s content.



## Advice for Parents & Carers



### Research It Yourself

If your child is interested in using WeChat, it’s a good idea to download it yourself before they do, to help you decide if it is appropriate for them to use. Getting the app yourself will allow you to experience how easy it is to obtain, how users can create and share their own content, quickly make connections with other people, discover users’ locations and so on.



### Disable Location Services

If you are intending to let your child use WeChat, we would strongly suggest that you do not let the app access their device’s location services. That will not only prevent random – and quite probably, unwanted – contact requests from strangers, but it will also stop other users nearby being able to pinpoint your child’s whereabouts.



### Adjust Security Settings

Unless a user alters it, the default security setting is that anyone else on WeChat (anywhere in the world) is able to see what they’ve posted – including photos and videos. What’s more, when a user adds text, images or video to their ‘Moments’ (a scrolling feed of friends’ updates), not only their contacts but anyone nearby can see what they’ve uploaded.



### Remember Linked Accounts

Bear in mind that users can connect WeChat to their Facebook and Twitter. That makes it easy to share content from the app – including posts that were intended to be private. If your child does link social media accounts, encourage them to think carefully before posting. Similarly, WeChat offers in-app purchases of stickers and games, so you may want to discuss in-app spending with your child in advance.



### Meet Our Expert

Jonathan Taylor is an authority on online safety, social media and online grooming, having previously been a covert internet investigator with the Metropolitan Police for more 10 years. He has worked extensively with UK and international schools to deliver training and guidance around the latest apps, platforms and dangers.



Sure! Love to :)

<https://nationalpost.com/news/censored-by-a-chinese-tech-giant-canadians-using-wechat-app-say-theyre-being-restricted>,  
<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3064832/how-wechat-censored-even-neutral-messages-about-coronavirus>,  
<https://www.todayonline.com/world/asia/wechat-app-used-pupils-sex-drugs-and-gambling>,  
<https://qz.com/518908/wechats-new-heat-map-feature-lets-users-and-chinese-authorities-see-where-crowds-are-forming/>