

WHAT KEPT YOU GOING THROUGH LOCKDOWN?



Mrs Carroll : Cycling!



Miss Daniels: making new connections with the neighbours



Mrs Hollins: true crime podcasts.



Mrs Burges: the book "Where the Crawdads sing"



Mrs Salisbury: Dog Walking



Miss James: learning from cookbooks



Nilu: spending time with family



Miss Roberts: Getting a new cat



Theo: Gardening



Danny: Sleeping



Beth: spending time with Seven and Co. in the study area



Abigail: going on walks and getting a coffee

BUNKPURUGU

Since 2016, The Becket School has formed a link with the parish of Our Lady of Hope in Bunkpurugu, Northern Ghana in order to build a new school. As a result of all the hard work our community has put in throughout the last few years, we now have just under £10,000 left to raise!

Below is some more information if you are interested in Ghana and why we need to give them our full support. Unfortunately, as a result of COVID-19, our resources and fundraising activity options have been limited. With additional new restrictions it is even harder to realise our aims.

Bunkpurugu is a small town located in the north east region of Ghana within the district Bunkpurugu-yunyoo (which has a population of around 135,000). The North of Ghana is significantly different to the south of Ghana as a result of it's limited development and lack of resources. Nationally, around 70 percent

of children go to primary school, yet in the northern region only 50% of children have that opportunity. Even with the opportunity, the majority of them have to work in small buildings such as mud huts, which are clearly not a suitable environment for people to learn. Furthermore, the three northern regions (circled in red on the map) combined have less than 9% of Ghana's hospitals even taking into account their population size. As a result of these issues bringing out the clear imbalance in funding between the north and south of Ghana, in 1953, representatives suggested to a constituent assembly that they should set up an institution that can provide funding directly into the North for the "purpose of them catching up".

In the past, Becket has raised money through bake sales, Christmas markets and of course our annual 5K run for Ghana. As 2020 was coming to an end, we decided it was the perfect time to act benevolently

and put all our efforts together in order to help those children who are simply asking for a basic right to a good education. Towards Christmas, some dedicated, musical students composed a Christmas song and organised a competition where other students could write the lyrics for it. This festive tune was released on itunes and we hope that you and your family enjoyed jamming along to it! The younger years also did an adapted version of our 5k run as obviously due to the circumstances at the time, a large gathering was impossible. Seeing as we have begun a brand new year with vast opportunities lying ahead of us, why not set yourself a new year's resolution to do more charity work for underprivileged people? As a start, donations to building this new school are still highly appreciated so if you feel like supporting this cause, please either write a cheque made payable to "The Becket School" with reference "Ghana" or donate via our new crowdfunding link. Thank you to those who have already done so much in order to support this cause and I hope we can all continue to strive to be better and more charitable every day!

By Philippa Lantelme



OUR ROLE IN THE ENVIRONMENT

The issue of the environment has been one that as a generation we have faced constantly throughout our lives. Now more than ever, other issues have influenced the care that is being given to our environment, or the lack of it. Whether lockdown has impacted our environment positively or negatively – the problem is that it has impacted it. There is no escaping climate change and the events that it is causing. It was here before Covid and it remains.

While we as a school community cannot restructure the economy to make it socially and environmentally viable, we have a duty to ensure we are providing the best possible ways to keep our earth healthy. This is not just a passing trend; it is a solid fact that action has to be taken. As a place of education, shouldn't we educate everyone on the real perpetrators of the destruction of our planet and how we can move towards a more sustainable Becket and Planet? Shouldn't we actively get involved in charities and campaigns in the fight against Climate Change and the destruction of our planet? We can and we should. The smallest difference is still a difference.



We are fortunate in our lives that we live in a privileged society not dependent wholly on seasons and charities to aid. Most natural disasters are affecting poorer nations who don't have the luxury of insurance and a place to stay when floods or destruction is caused. What might have once been blamed on monsoons or movement on the tectonic plates is now influenced by unusual movement of pressure systems. Now I am no expert in geography or a scientist but this means something. In the UK flooding is described as shocking by our newspapers and online. While we throughout history have suffered natural disasters, including the 2007 floods where 13 people were killed and the 2005 Birmingham Tornado which caused £40 million in damages, nothing compares to those of poorer countries. We have become so acclimatised to appeals that we have lost compassion. We need to recognise the actions that we take are having consequences. All of this is nothing compared to the waste that is dumped in the ocean and countries due to loopholes. In September 2020



alone the UK shipped 7,133 metric tons of waste to non-OECD countries including Malaysia, Pakistan, Vietnam, Indonesia and Turkey. This waste that cannot be recycled usually ends up illegally burned or dumped in landfills or waterways. As a school we have a duty to reduce our part in this number. A small price to pay for the gains of the many – it all has to start somewhere.

We are often told that we have no voice, one-person can't change anything, and one vote won't count. We as young people are sometimes spoken down to about matters like this, as if it is not impacting our lives as much as anyone else's and our future even more. This leads to many young people thinking they can't make a difference. They can. As a collective, we can make any change we want to. As a generation, we need to act, and we need to do it now.

Now is a time to come together as a school community and productively make plans to act.

By Rebecca Smith.

BAKE FOR THE COMMUNITY!



Throughout Christmas 2020, Yanna Mihaylova in Year 13 decided to generously use her free time to promote and help out the Beeston Rylands Community Association. In December, Yanna put around posters in school to ask for students to sign up and give some free time to bake for the local community. Students were encouraged to bake cakes which would be given out to the elderly members of the Beeston Rylands community. Usually, the BRCA would host a Friday club where they would come around and socialise and eat together. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, this was not able to take place indoors anymore so instead all the cakes were personally delivered. A big THANK YOU to everyone who helped out this winter and a special shout out to Yanna for encouraging the Becket School to take part in this brilliant community event.

By Philippa Lantelme

BEFRIEND THE ELDERLY - YOPEY

During Lockdown many elderly people, like everyone else, were trapped inside. Loneliness was already a problem for those without friends and family nearby. They were lonelier than ever due to restrictions and the health difficulties that they faced, leaving them isolated and without much social contact. I know it was hard enough getting my mum to change her phone and understand computers, so for those who



grew up without these things they didn't have this back up plan for communication like we might have had. Many charities are trying to help those in need of connection and we are a part of them. Recently the school joined a scheme called Befriend the Elderly.

Many schools around the country have already participated. When everything was "normal", visits would take place; events and helping to get the elderly out and connected was very much possible. So, like everything else they have had to come up with new ways to create connections.

Young People wrote letters and created pen-pal relationships with those in care homes, often taking about common interests and life advice. Others painted portraits of elderly members, beloved pets – that would help those with dementia to regain memories they might have lost. Crosswords were remodelled on events like afternoon tea, and dance lessons were held over zoom, with all parties joining in, whether sat or standing. We learn from these who have gone before us, so giving back is a vital part of being in a community.

By Rebecca Smith.



BLACK LIVES MATTER

The Becket Activism Group has been working zealously to raise more awareness and educate fellow pupils and staff on pressing issues which impact society. During Black History Month the activism group created the word of the week presentation titled: Inclusion. The aim of the PowerPoint, which was displayed across forms, was to introduce the idea of appreciation/celebration of diversity within school. The activism group hoped that their focus on the diversity dance in their presentation, which touches on the Black Lives Matter Movement, would inspire thought and questions about the problems within our own



society. We should not just be addressing societal issues but also look at our stance on the movement. The activism group hopes to translate response and awareness into change and actual change. They are aware that this change will not be instantaneous; societal issues such as racism cannot be solved overnight; however they have acknowledged that we cannot discredit the first few progressions/ steps towards change. As a school during Covid 19 the activism group are taking actions in order to promote/address the Black Lives Matter Movement; one way in which they did this was the PSHE lesson they formulated. They hoped that this lesson would open discussions on whether Black History Month is an appropriate celebratory time frame for educating millions of people about the history of Black people and black communities or whether it should be more integrated in our school curriculum or explored more within the safety of a school environment.

If you want to learn more, there is an Instagram account which you should go and follow! The account is called [freshperspective._](#) and they hope to use it to inform. They will be posting information about a wide variety of issues with the intention of educating and raising awareness. They will also be providing resources to enable you to get involved and help support movements. Currently in their Instagram bio they have a link to a document which has a selection of Black History Month Resources which you can use to educate yourselves and others. The resources range from books to Podcasts, Television Shows, Films, videos and websites, there is something for everybody. There are also links to petitions which you can sign and physically aid change, take your thoughts against racial injustice and turn it into action. Simply highlighting racial injustice to someone won't necessarily replace their existing racist mind-sets, but asking questions about their opinion will allow them to deconstruct their ideologies and actively examine the way they are thinking and hopefully see that it is wrong. In conclusion, the Activism group believes that it is important to acknowledge issues but also go a step further and translate awareness into physical/actual actions (sign petitions, educate yourself and have conversations).

By Kate Swift



LOCKDOWN RECAP

23rd March 2020 – first lockdown announced.

Exams cancelled, schools out. Clap for Carers, Captain Tom and Rule of 6 were just some of the highlights of the lockdown, “Stay home, protect the NHS, save lives” became the chorus of our summer months spent apart. It was long, it was hard but it was worth it. 6 months’ worth of language-learning, skill enhancing and tiktok dancing later, was announced school year 2020-2021 would kick off ‘as normal’ that September. What ‘normal’ meant, we would soon find out.

Students and teachers filed back, stepping into the uniforms they’d left vacant since March. The year kicked off as any other year would. How long it would last – no one knew but Becket didn’t let that get in the way.

The school morphed into a rainbow of different bubbles and zones to keep contact to a minimum. It wasn’t just the new students who screamed into lessons just before the bell but teachers too, having to get used to the new room layout. With hand gel stationed at every spare desk, wall and ledge and extracurricular sports, clubs and activities cancelled, everything possible was done to keep staff and students safe. Even with the second lockdown kicking off in between, we kept going.

However, it just wasn’t enough. Our bubble popped. We weren’t just home for Christmas, but the foreseeable future too.

2021 began and so did another 2 months’ worth of online learning. It plodded along. The home desk routine felt old now. But finally there was some positive news.

8th March – all students back to school. And they have been ever since!

We look forward to the day when masks are something of the past and we are no longer multiple bubbles but one Becket community again.

By Samantha Goldney



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THE MASKED SINGER



“Fundraising with COVID-19 restrictions is impossible”, says Mrs Barlow. However, as we have seen with The Masked Singer competition, Becket has discovered creative opportunities to build hope in Bunkpurugu- without having to run 5k. This competition was based on the new singing game show that featured on our screens for the first time this quarantine. Bizarre and melodramatic costumes are used to disguise people’s faces so their voices prevail. We thought it was the Becket staff’s turn to take off their blue surgical masks and try on something a bit more theatrical-

The Masked Singer Competition involved videos of 16 staff members singing, with their identity concealed by masks (and additional fun props). Songs included Rihanna’s ‘Umbrella’ and Rag’n’Bone Man’s ‘Human’. The volunteers took the opportunity to unleash their inner Darth Vader and ball-gown invitees! Students and teachers entered with £1 to guess which vocal legends hid behind their masks. All the videos were released during tutor time and were also accessible through the beinspirational website. Successful entries were entered into a prize draw for Amazon and Waterstones vouchers. Once all entries were received, the masked singers were revealed!

Nearly £200 was raised to support Building Hope in Bunkpurugu through this alternative fundraising event that connected the school during these restrictive times. We hope to see more of these creative and exciting fundraisers throughout the next year!

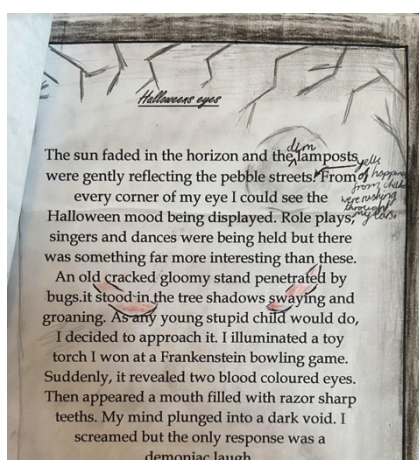
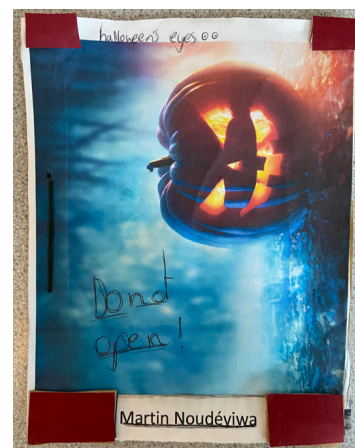
By Riya James and Samantha Goldney

HALLOWEEN SHORT STORY COMPETITION

To celebrate creativity in challenging times, members of Year 7 took part in a writing competition. Their mission was to write a mini horror story with the added challenge of not going above 100 words. From bloodcurdling screams to chilling midnight walks through secluded forests, the stories did provide a fright!

In third place is this terrifying tale which follows the footsteps of starving children lost in the woods. Let's begin...

It was a bland and breezy evening in the middle of fall; two young children and one innocent, bedridden mother were all alone inside a possessed, rusty house. They didn't have a lot of food to eat nor water. The children could only think of one place to be saved from starvation: the woods. With one step, they could feel the rattling of elliptical leaves beneath them. When they were halfway through, all of a sudden they could feel chilling Goosebumps all around them. A quiet growl... they ran away, panting and grasping for their life. Three days after, the children still had not returned. But there was one decrepit object left behind in the woods: a doll.



Next, in second place, is 'Eternal Nightmare'. This story is exploding with suspense, strange happenings and ghastly scenes. Will the character ever escape the nightmarish ring she is catapulting round? You'll have to read to find out!

She ran from it, but she could not hide from it... she screamed at it to go away, but it did not, she asked for mercy, but it did not give her mercy. And then in a split second it would all be over... and it would all start over again – it was like a circle of dimensions that she was travelling through; the further she got the ghastlier it got. She breathed a silent prayer that it would all go away... that it would all end, she wished she would stop having to struggle against something so wicked and bloodcurdling.

Finally, in first place is 'Halloween's eyes...' by Martin Noudeviwa! This story, coming with the additional warning of 'DO NOT OPEN', caught the judges' eyes. It was not just the gloomy description of shadowy trees and peculiar creatures but the immense decoration of pumpkins, ghouls and dripping blood that wowed them over. It is as follows:

The sun faded in the horizon and the dim lampposts were gently reflecting the pebble streets. Yells of happiness from children were rushing through my ears. From every corner of my eye I could see the Halloween mood being displayed. Role plays, singers and dances were being held but there was something far more interesting than these. An old cracked gloomy stand penetrated by bugs stood in the tree shadows swaying and groaning. As any young stupid child would do, I decided to approach it. I illuminated a toy torch I won at a Frankenstein bowling game. Suddenly, it revealed two blood coloured eyes. Then appeared a mouth filled with razor sharp teeth. My mind plunged into a dark void. I screamed but the only response was a demoniac laugh.

Moral: if you see a creepy shed filled with bugs, don't go near .

This competition was inspired by the end to 'The 500 Words Competition' run by TV and radio presenter Chris Evans. It was one of the biggest creative writing contests in the world. The Becket thought it was such a shame to lose this inspiring competition that we decided to do our own. Congratulations to all participants!

By Samantha Goldney



IT'S NOT REALLY GOODBYE.....

We spoke to Mrs Carroll as she steps down from her role as Deputy Headteacher.

What is your best memory?

The best moment of each year has been the leaving day speeches and activities led by the students. It is lovely to see what the students come up with. It was also great seeing everyone turn up on time for Prom in their suits and dresses, knowing that I won't have to nag them any longer about being late!

What is the strangest thing to happen in the job?

I remember having to go to a boxing club in town to watch CCTV footage of a two students having a boxing match. That was a bit mad!

It's quite interesting to see how the dynamics of every school day can change, I'm always kept on my toes. A lot of the things I experience are not in the job description!

What has been the most rewarding part?

The most rewarding part is having the opportunity to work with quality members of staff and seeing students going on to gain places at university, getting the jobs that want and achieving their goals in life. It's quite rewarding indeed to know that we had a part to play in that.

What is a great sporting memory?

I have loved the girls' basketball team and watching them go from Year 7s to very skilled players in Sixth Form.

This year's Year 11 Girls Football Team- they have been amazing since they came together in year 7. Several County Cup Finals- and this was our year to win it- pity we were in lockdown!! Next year!!! Sports Day is always superb!!!

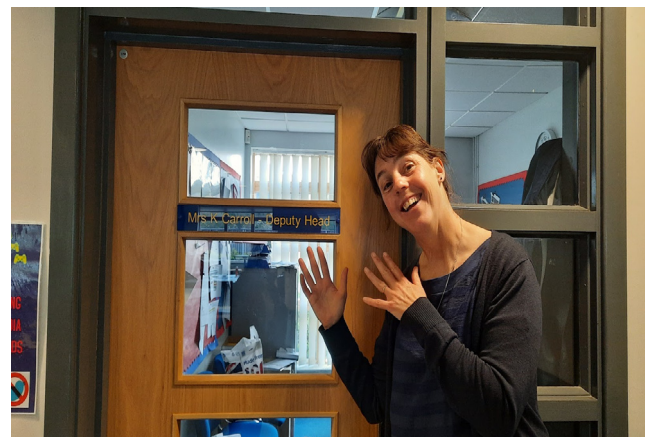
What has been the most rewarding year?

This year's Year 13 has been the most rewarding as students have been so resilient. I really hope they get what they deserve and go on to do the things they want in their personal and academic lives.

What would be your last message ?

No regrets! Never wish you could have done something different/ better while looking back. Instead, focus on the moment now and what you can do to achieve your goals for the future.

By Anitta Johny & Rebecca Smith



This edition of The Despatch was written and edited by Samantha Goldney, Philippa Lantelme, Rebecca Smith, Kate Swift, Riya James and Anitta Johny.