

# ST CATHERINE'S NEWSLETTER

*"Be who God wants you to be, and you will set the world on fire." - St Catherine of Siena*

*Happy Half Term to all staff, pupils and parents!*

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## From the Headmistress

I have valued the opportunity to speak with some of you over the last weeks, and to hear your views and questions about this period of remote learning. It has been pleasing to learn that our regular updates have been so helpful and I can assure you that we are looking carefully at what provision might be possible after half term, following Government advice.

Meanwhile, it has been wonderful to see pupils in Google Meets, whether for lessons, for commendations or for other meetings. I know that this period is rather odd for the girls, as it is for all of us, and so these online platforms are especially valuable for keeping our community together. I would also like to mention the many examples I have seen of girls continuing to be creative, ambitious and engaged in their learning, which shows real resilience - well done girls!

I wish you a very happy half term.

With kind regards,  
Mrs McPherson

# Reminders

## Stars School Travel Plan – Going for Gold Accreditation

We have been working hard on our Transport for London STARS Plan and have submitted our application for Gold Accreditation. STARS – Sustainable Travel: Active, Responsible, Safe – is an accreditation scheme for schools, nurseries and colleges to inspire young Londoners to travel sustainably, actively, responsibly and safely. In doing this, STARS empowers children and improves the safety and wellbeing of the whole community. It also encourages active travel behaviour and improves the environment around the school. We will keep you updated on our application and in the meantime, you can find out more about the programme at the STARS website

## Virtual Dance Club – Tuesday 1.30-2.05pm

Miss Hogate-Smith is very happy to announce the launch of Virtual Dance Club for the senior school, which will run every week, just like it does in term time, for students of all abilities to practice, build technique, learn choreography, keep fit, break up the time spent at computer screens and have fun.

As an additional motivating factor, we are hoping some of our senior school girls will be able to compete in the ISA Dance Competitions in October. Last year was the first time St Catherine's School competed at this event, and Miss Holgate-Smith will be applying for spaces when the application deadline opens later this month. Therefore, she will be starting to teach the choreography for the competition in Tuesday's Virtual Dance Club. While our competition team will be selected based on successful auditions in the new school year, it is recommended that girls who are already interested in competing do try to join in with Virtual Dance Club, in order to develop their strength and to get ahead with learning choreography.



# Fine Art from Home

The girls have been working really hard from home, it's been fantastic to see their passion for Art shine through in their work. Recently, KS3 have been studying and creating their own "Still Life", inspired by Janet Fish and Paul Cezanne. Whilst Yr9 have also been experimenting with Photography within their "Decorated World" project. Well done girls, we really have enjoyed seeing your work, achieved through your perseverance and enthusiasm!

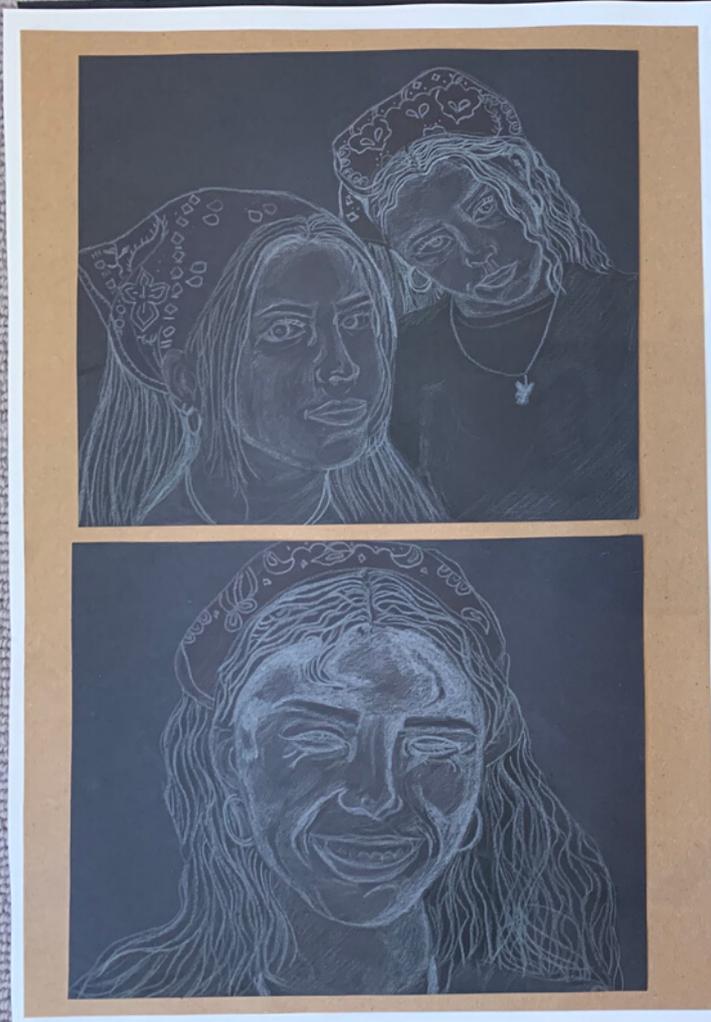
## Year 7 Art



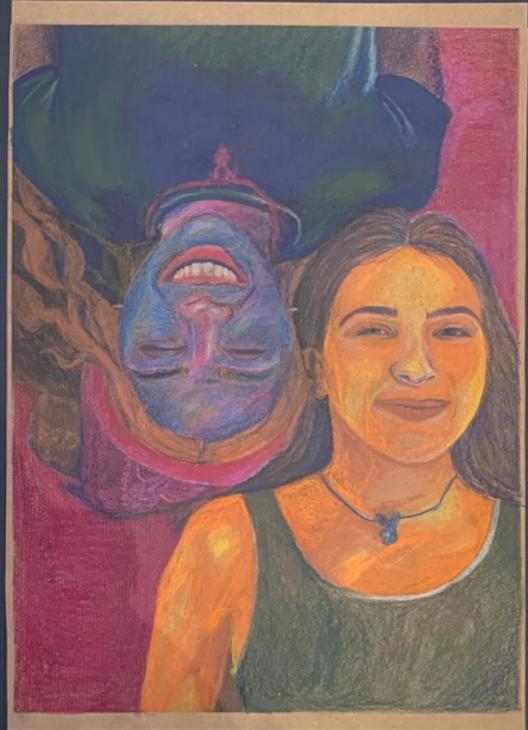
## Year 8 Art



# Fine Art from Home



For initial developing ideas, I've produced a variety of drawings in different medias. By working in white pencil on the black paper, I've enjoyed inverting the images and playing with different tones and shadows/shading. With this double page I've focused more on the faces and emotions I can portray with or without colour depth.



By adding vibrant colours in replica of sun-tone, emotions and the aspects of fantasy and fiction are highlighted. It is as though you are seeing the girls through a filter (not reality). I did each girl a different colour to still show variation, yet by focusing more on faces and lighting I am redressing my journey in a new light.

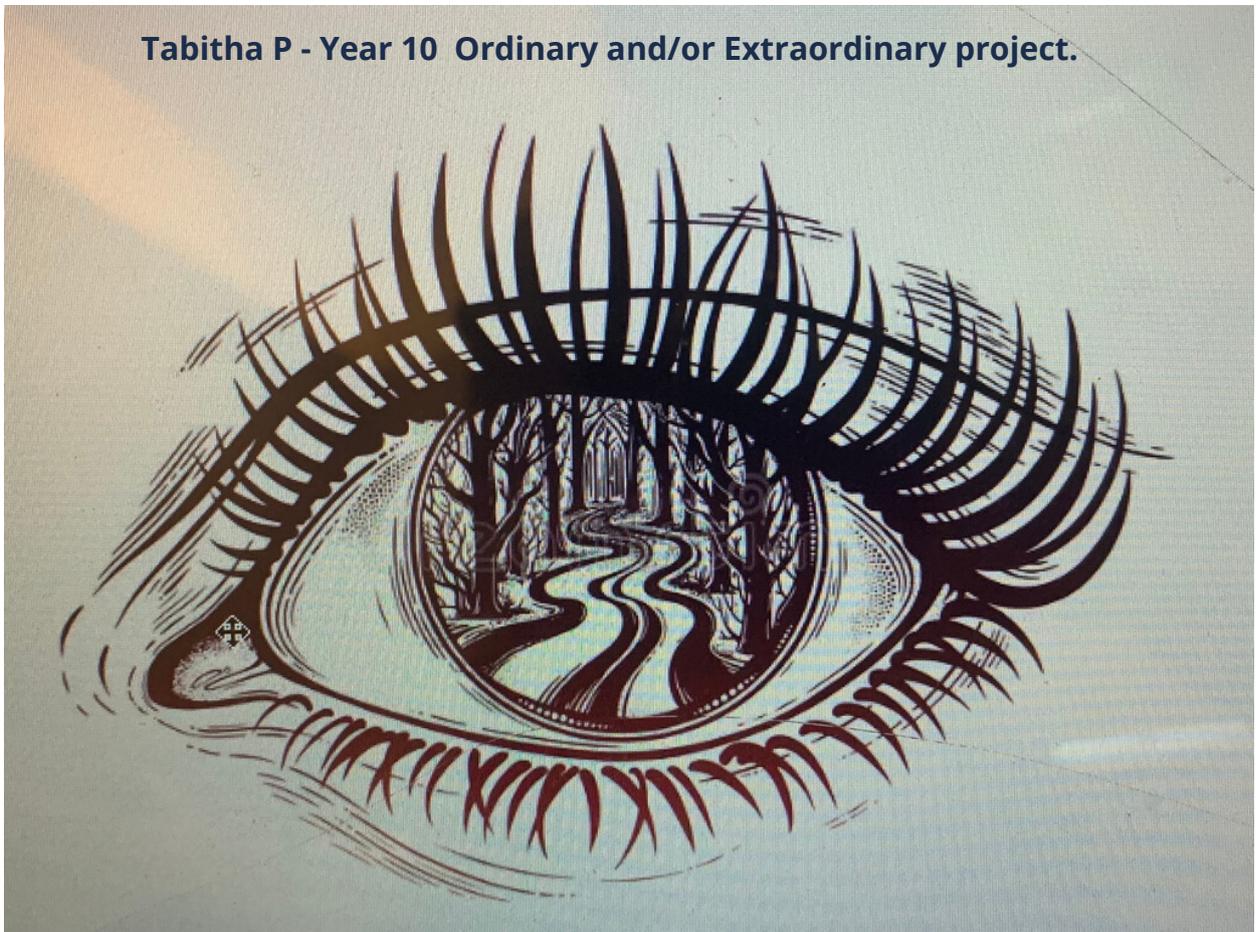
**Ella Feldmar**  
**Year 12 Artist**  
**Theme: 'Truth, Fantasy or Fiction'**

# Fine Art from Home

## Year 9 Art and Photography



Tabitha P - Year 10 Ordinary and/or Extraordinary project.



# A word from our Young Reporters

## An interview with an artist during a global crisis by Millie, Year 13

Mary Hayward-Smith is a ceramics artist based in Hampton who also paints in oils. She is Head of the Art Department at St Catherine's School in Twickenham. I was fortunate enough to do a virtual interview via email to ask her some questions on how our current crisis has affected her life as an artist.

### **How have you found COVID-19 to have affected your work?**

COVID-19 is still a surreal experience. It hasn't directly affected my work, as I work on a number of paintings at the same time in my studio, so that they hang together. My work explores vessels in a place, an interior or a colour. My paintings at times work with strong light or dark colours but since the lockdown I have been drawn to the lighter, paler tones.

### **Has it impacted the amount of work you usually do?**

Being at home, I have started to organise and clear out old things. I have had time to look through sketchbooks, prints, drawings, old exhibition catalogues and gallery lists of returned and sold work. This has taken me back to different periods of my life, from doing my Art A Level, foundation course, degree and postgraduate, as well as times when I was a member of different artists groups and working in different studios. It is amazing that my work has elements that are still the same and that I am still attracted to the same stimulus.

### **Have you been allowed to go to your studio? If not, has this affected your work in any way?**

I have continued to work in my studio, as I have an individual space so I am not interacting with anyone else. I have missed the social interaction with the artist whose studio is next to mine, as he has chosen to work at home. I have had the opportunity to spend more time there, over the Easter holidays and at the weekends. The fact that the sun has shone, the natural light in the studio has been lovely and the view over the river beautiful, has helped me to enjoy the time spent on my own!



# A word from our Young Reporters

## **An interview with Miss Johnston on what it's like to teach from home during lockdown by Rashmini, Year 11**

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the world and people everywhere are being called upon to help their communities by working from home. Teachers are playing a huge role in helping by helping the continuation of education all over the country, from emailing work to children, to going into school to look after the children of key workers, to posting work for students who don't have access to a computer at home. I interviewed Miss Emily Johnston, a language teacher at St Catherine's School, Twickenham to find out what it is like for all the teachers who are working so incredibly hard at home to support children at home all over the country during this difficult time.

### **What was your reaction when you first found out that you would be doing online teaching?**

At first, I was really apprehensive because being a teacher is all about interacting and being with students so I wasn't sure how it was going to work. I was also quite sad because I like coming in every day and seeing the students and my colleagues. However, with the situation as it was, I also felt relief because it wasn't safe to be coming in every day, so it was what I was expecting to happen.

### **How well prepared do you think you were for this change?**

I think we were fairly well-prepared by the time it happened because we had been expecting it so we had done training on Google Classroom and we had a lot of meetings together as teachers to work out how this would work. I know some teachers used Google Classroom a lot anyway. I, personally, didn't, so I had all of that to learn, which was a lot in the space of a week but by the time I left, I felt like I knew what was going to be happening because we had been preparing for it long before the government announced that schools would close.

### **How has work changed since working from home?**

It has changed a lot because being a teacher, essentially, is about communicating and about being with students and colleagues and that's been taken away, so it has been a lot of learning how to work digitally, which has been a challenge because I am used to having my whiteboard pen and the whiteboard and teaching that way. However, it's been good because I have been able to find new platforms for vocabulary learning and verb learning, things that I will use when I go back to the classroom, which is great.

### **What additional responsibilities are there when teaching from home?**

For me, the responsibilities have stayed the same, which is the students' welfare and the teaching and progression of students so my focus is still on the girls at school. I know that lots of other teachers have other responsibilities like people who are dependent on them, like children, people that they're caring for, but for me personally, I don't have that so it's been very much focusing on making sure the students are attending the lessons, if they're not, finding out why, talking to parents and making sure they're understanding the work. I have started doing video lessons now so that I can make sure that the students are understanding my questions.

# A word from our Young Reporters

## **Are there elements of teaching from home that have proven to be more difficult than others?**

I think, for me, marking has been a little bit more difficult because normally, I'd be able to collect in a set of books, whereas that's not the case now, and only some students are able to complete all the work on Google Docs and submit it. Not every student has access to a computer every lesson so then they do it in their exercise books and I get a photo of their work, so I've got a lot of work in lots of different places. I think that's probably the thing I found most challenging, of course, the technology as well, I've had a few lessons that were supposed to schedule but didn't schedule and a few mishaps like that but I'm getting to grips with all the technology now.

## **What do you think the most challenging thing has been and how have you overcome this?**

I think making sure that students are engaged has been the most difficult thing because I can't see their reactions, I can't see how they're doing in the classroom, so I'm kind of guessing whether they're enjoying the activities or whether it's working for them, but I've started to overcome this by having video chats with people. So I set a task at the beginning of the lesson and then give students a time to join the video call so I have small groups of students for feedback so that I can see if the tasks are too difficult or too easy or if they needed an extension, which has really helped because speaking to the students is the best way to find out how they are.

## **Do you have any advice for any teachers who are in a similar position to you?**

I would say that the most important thing is to look after yourself and your well-being and not put too much pressure on yourselves, it's an unprecedented time and this is new for everybody. I would also say that lots of websites have given their resources for free to teachers now so they can access loads of different websites and loads of different resources to help students learn digitally. It's helped me a lot so I think that would be a piece of advice I would give them.

## **Do you have any advice for students who are learning from home?**

I think I would tell them to try their best, there's going to be days when they don't feel great about the situation and they may feel a bit down and that's ok, they need to know that those emotions are fine and that they can reach out to their teachers to ask for help if they need it, and that they're not on their own, the people who are there for them at school are still there for them now, and that's what they should know is readily available to them. Also, I'd say to just try your best to keep up with the lessons, anything that you can learn now will help you when you go back, as little or as much as that is, really just try your best and keep in contact with your teachers and your friends to make sure that you're on track.

## **Are there things that you find easier to do when teaching from home?**

I found that I really like using websites like Memrise and Conjuguemos and things like that that are based on technology that I can't do in the classroom because we don't always have access to the laptops and students aren't allowed their phones, so actually being able to let them spend 10 minutes on websites like that, I think really helps them to learn vocabulary or verb formations, and that's something that I can do now that I can't necessarily do in the classroom. I just think that this is a difficult time and there are ups and downs for everybody but I think the resilience of the girls at the school has been fantastic, everybody is getting on with it and everyone's trying their best and I think that everyone should be really proud.

# Mei's Marvelous Masks!

Mei, Year 8, has been working extremely hard outside of her remote lessons to hand make beautiful face masks, made to order. The masks have been made for many of the St Catherine's community from a wide range of lovely materials. We are very proud of her hard work and creative talents. Well done, Mei!



# Article: A New World

Today the world awakes thinking about life when it was normal. Was it for the better or for the worse? We will never know. Before we could only hear movement, we would wake up feeling miserable but now we wake up different just like the world. The people we love we cannot see and our friends and lovers we cannot hug them or talk to them like we used to. Covid-19 has changed everyone and everything but some more than others. Everyone used to love each other but now we are crazy in love as this time has shown us how much to value love. We await to see and catch up on life.

Life has taken its toll. All generations have changed: elderly have started to use technology, the mid generation has started to use technology even more and last but not least the young generation have started to use technology more than ever. Technology has now taken over the world.

2020 what a start to the year we have had, I sit inside looking out of the window watching time pass by. Time is not a priority now, we used to want all the time in the world, well now we do have that time. What do we do with it? Now we have the time we do not know what to do with it, we are all clueless and lost in life. They say we should get crafty with objects we have at home but the thought of fun makes us think of our loved ones and friends how they made us laugh and have fun. It is hard to say goodbye to someone when you didn't expect something this tragic to happen.

On the other hand, we have a world where crime and offences have decreased and our world may be improving as we are not using

our vehicles as much as we did before quarantine. Climate change may get better if we stay inside and incorporate some ideas that we have learned and are learning from this experience and transfer it to the normal life we will receive again.

When I go outside all I see is zombies, the people of the world have been turned into zombies, one looks and acts the same as the other in front. Every country is suffering, some more than others but we all need to look after each other as we all live on the same planet called Earth, we may be from different continents but we are one. Covid-19 has shown us the better and worse, but it's up to each one of you to choose which one you want. Once again I look at the window and ask the world outside, "will things go back to how they were?" We will have to wait and see.

Beatriz V, Year 7



# Feast Day Festivities

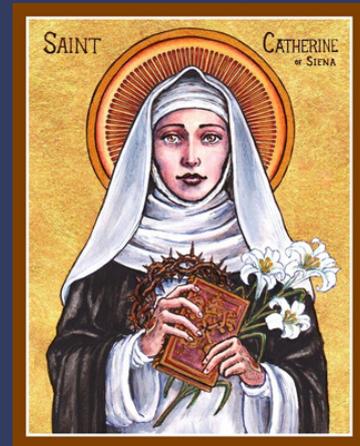
Our School Feast day , celebrating St Catherine of Siena on 29 April, is usually a highlight of the school calendar for students and staff with the highly anticipated 'Crunchie Mass' being a central part of the celebration. This year, as with so many other events, we had to engage in some creative thinking as to how to mark this occasion when in lockdown.

We began with a special assembly where I spoke about St Catherine's care for the sick, particularly those with contagious diseases that no-one else wanted to tend. Quite an appropriate image to consider at a time when so many in our communities are continuing to work and help others at the height of this pandemic. The RE Department asked pupils to reflect on some of Catherine's other well known sayings - beyond the well-known 'Be who God called you to be and you will set the world on fire.' and received some really thoughtful responses:

**"God is more willing to pardon than we have been to sin." This is telling people that God will forgive you no matter what, and I think it is very reassuring. Anastasia C., 7S**

**"The human heart is drawn by love." This shows us that we must be kind to one another if we want to draw people towards us. Thando K., 7S**

Finally, pupils were invited to share photos of how they celebrated our Feast Day, including enjoying their Crunchie Bars - some even worked on creating their own Crunchie bars too - very impressive! - Miss Ryan, Chaplain



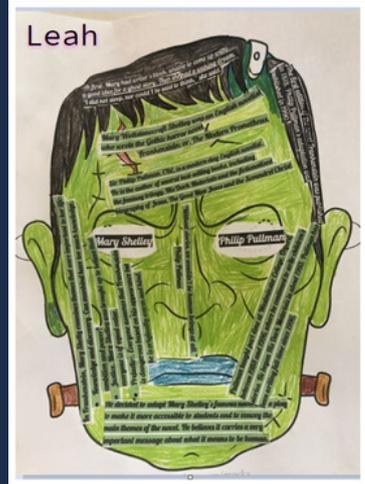
Lord,  
You called Catherine to follow you and show love for you through her example of caring for others. Her honesty, courage and compassion gained her the respect of all who met her. May we too follow her example; trusting in your love and showing the same courage, integrity and care that Catherine did. Help us to live our School motto 'Not words, but deeds' Building communities that show true love for others.  
AMEN



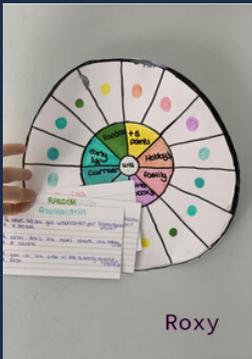
# Remote Learning Success!



Bella P



Leah

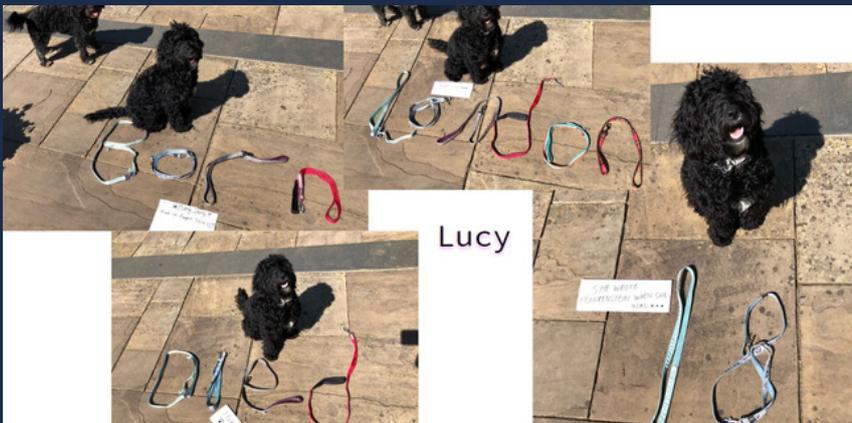


Roxy



Vicky

*Year 8 English creatively explored the work of Mary Shelley and her novel, Frankenstein*



Lucy



Hannah



## Cara's Creation

Cara, 8T, shared some pics of her homemade ice cream. The flavour was After Eight and chocolate chip, with vanilla ice cream as the base. Looks delicious!