



Varndean
College Brighton & Hove

UPDATE

SPRING 2021


**FINE ART STUDENT, WINS
PLACE ON THE ROYAL
ACADEMY WORKSHOP
PROGRAMME**



**CHEMISTRY TUTOR, JOHN
LUTON, SWEEPS UP YET
ANOTHER AWARD**



**OUR TRIBUTE
TO THE NHS**

THANK YOU
NHS 
FROM
VARNDEAN COLLEGE



FACE MASKS, SANITISER & VIRTUAL REALITY ... TO STRENGTH, DETERMINATION & ADMIRATION!

AIDAN MARAJ AND HIS TUTOR, SARAH LAMPARD-SAWYER AND THEIR 3D PRINTED VISORS



Throughout a year which has been the most unprecedented and challenging ever, we cannot express how proud we are of our students and staff who have risen above all expectations to manage and overcome the difficulties, frustration and sadness the past year has presented everyone.

MARCH 2020

As the country was about to enter its first national lockdown, our small IT team rose to the unthinkable challenge by ensuring that all lessons could be conducted virtually.

Additional IT equipment, such as laptops, chrome books, microphones and cameras were sourced as a matter of urgency and from 23 March, Vardean was plunged into a world of teaching never experienced before. By the remarkable use of technology, all lessons took place from tutors' and students' homes instead and we learned how to adapt in a way never before imagined.

APRIL 2020

When it hit the headlines that care homes and hospitals were

running out of vital PPE, 3D Design student Aidan Maraj and his tutor, Sarah Lampard-Sawyer, got to work in their spare time making face visors using the College's 3D printer. Whilst Aidan researched an approved design, Sarah managed to source the acetate and together they both went into mass production. With the help of his mother back at home, Aidan then assembled the kits and they were distributed to St Peter's and St James's Hospices and the Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath.

MAY 2020

The College found its own unique way of thanking the NHS by allowing its currently redundant football pitch to become the canvas for an aerial view tribute. Local grounds maintenance company, SLS, used their line painting skills to create an expansive message on the grassed pitch at the front of the college, creating a spectacular sight for all to see.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

September saw the long-awaited return of students to college and the welcoming of our new cohort of first years, including 23 new international students from overseas. Life at Vardean wasn't what it used to be though; with blended learning (one week face-to-face, one week online), social distancing, the wearing of masks, hand sanitiser, one-way corridors and classroom seating plans, all becoming part of our new

OUR FOOTBALL PITCH BECAME THE CANVAS FOR AN AERIAL VIEW TRIBUTE TO THE NHS



OUR YEAR 1A LEVEL TEXTILES STUDENTS EVEN TOOK TO MAKING THEIR OWN MASKS



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

Throughout November and December, lessons continued using blended learning, with many enrichment activities also taking place online too. You can read more about some of the activities our students and staff have been up to further on in this publication. Our library continued to operate using a Click 'n' Collect service and some students were able to sit exams, socially distanced of course. Our Year 1A Level Textiles students even took to making their own masks.

daily routine. We even got our own Vardean branded masks produced for students!

September and October are also the time we usually look forward to greeting prospective Year 11 students and their parents from across Sussex to our Open Events, but this presented yet another huge and unimaginable challenge when these too had to transform into virtual reality.

The Marketing team, along with our dedicated and passionate tutors, our Media Technician and the IT team, rose to the challenge by creating an amazing array of videos showcasing every subject on the curriculum, general college videos, a student led video tour, as well as an interactive 360 degree tour of the campus. In addition, we also held two evenings of live Subject Q&As for prospective students, as well as participating in many schools' Q&As.

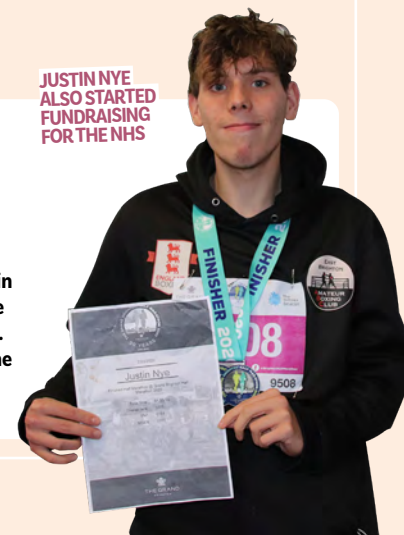
JANUARY 2021

Meanwhile, applications to study at the College from September 2021 were flooding in and it was such an honour to know that so many Year 11 students want to become part of our 'Vardean community'. In January we started

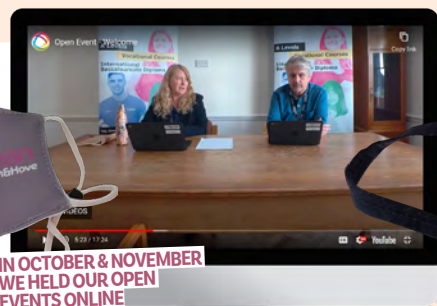
meeting all our new applicants via online interviews and it was great pleasure to see everyone, albeit on screen. We are just sad that we haven't been able to meet everyone in person yet, but look forward to a day soon when we can.

Everyone at Vardean College is so immensely proud of the way in which our students, prospective students, parents/carers and staff have adapted to all the unforeseen changes during the past twelve months and how resilient, determined and united as a Vardean family everyone has become. We hope that a brighter future now lies ahead.

JUSTIN NYE ALSO STARTED FUNDRAISING FOR THE NHS



Student Justin Nye also started fundraising for the NHS by undertaking daily training in order to compete in the next Brighton Marathon. The 2020 event was unfortunately cancelled due to Covid, but Justin is still training, hopefully to take part in this year's event instead. Justin has already completed the Half Marathon raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Support.



IN OCTOBER & NOVEMBER WE HELD OUR OPEN EVENTS ONLINE



VARDEAN BRANDED MASKS

VARNDEAN BECOMES CREATIVE TO SUPPORT THE WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

We all know what a testing time it's been for everyone's mental health throughout the past year, so over the past few months staff at Varndean College have worked together to create a series of Well-Being Sites to help staff and students manage through these difficult times. In December, a 'Winter Break Well-Being Page' was created which offered brilliant tips, tricks and ideas on how to relax over the Christmas break. These ranged from recipes and crafts to films, music and a whole host more. In February, this was then followed up with a further Well-Being Site, again with a huge host of ideas and links, including fitness, cooking, art, mindfulness and meditation. As part of their Sport Leadership Qualification, the College's Sports Leaders also created their own site, full of sporting ideas, activities and challenges to help improve fitness, health and well-being. To find out more and take part, go to <https://sites.google.com/varndean.ac.uk/varndean-college-wellbeing> <https://sites.google.com/varndean.ac.uk/varndean-college-sport-leaders/home>

In addition to this, the College has been continuing its successful collaboration with Andrew Wright from 'Action Your Potential' who has been working with our students during their tutorial programme to help build

the best mind possible to face today's challenges. Andrew, who is the founder of Action Your Potential and has spent 25 years working in schools, helps children and young people take a look at the workings of the human brain and use neuroscience and psychology to help them be the very best they can. Andrew has been bringing his neuroscientific approach to the classroom and, together with the College's Well-being team, has been creating excellent 'Be the Best You' learning resources to the tutorial programme. These bespoke learning materials include simple steps and strategies on developing daily habits which enhance engagement, well-being, learning and motivation to help transform outcomes. Listening to students' feedback, Andrew and the tutorial team created bespoke webinars and 'daily life experience' tasks to be carried out in tutorial lessons and beyond. For more details, go to Andrew's website www.actionyourpotential.org

Meanwhile, the College has recently appointed its new cohort of Mental Health Champions to support the well-being of students. Further details to come soon.



SEXUAL HEALTH & CONTRACEPTION SERVICES AT VARNDEAN

In support of World Aids Day, Varndean students were offered free sexual health testing packs and freebies by the Brighton & Hove Sexual Health & Contraception Service (SHAC) back in December. Although

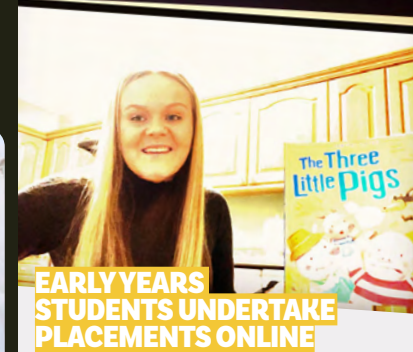
the service couldn't actually visit the college in person like they would normally do, they still arranged for their freebies and information to be delivered so as to be available to all students.



IT'S A PHILOSOPHICAL LIFE

The Philosophy programme at Varndean has been busy both in and out of lockdown in recent months. Under the auspices of Fleur Hemmings, Philosophy Society has engaged in a range of talks by a mix of both students and staff. From the students, Dohara De Silva spoke about ethical obligations to repatriate works of art and Alex Woodhead spoke about capitalism.

Philosophy support teacher, Zach Jacobs, gave a talk on whether Nietzsche was an existentialist. All these talks were of a fantastic calibre and the discussion was fantastic. The programme is also running sessions on Descartes's Meditations and ran a student/staff reading and discussion evening on Nietzsche. In a similar vein, Theory of Knowledge IB students have been engaged in sophisticated presentations that apply critical thinking about the nature of knowledge to real-life situations - considering everything from Trump's tweets, to atheist claims to a better life, to ethnocentric bias in musical theory. Vibrant lively discussions are had in all these forums to encourage students to be critically minded and ethical thinkers on whatever issues life brings to us whether through academic literature or musing on the ineffable!

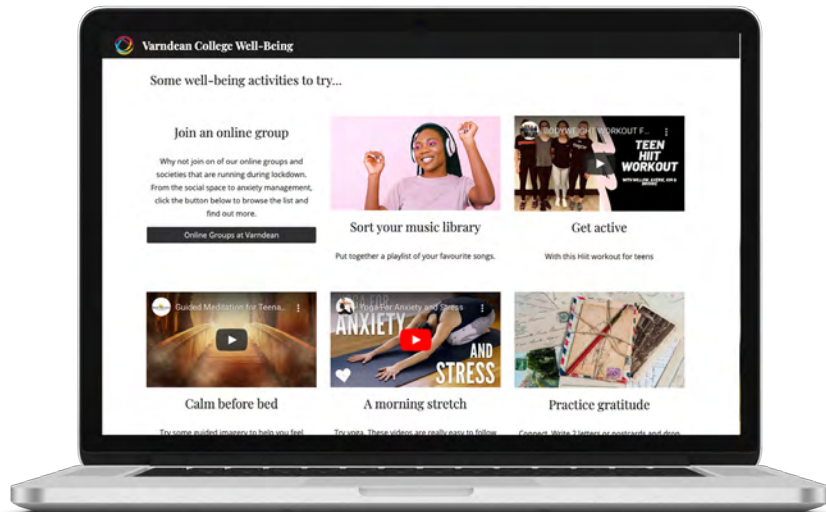


EARLY YEARS STUDENTS UNDERTAKE PLACEMENTS ONLINE

Lockdown for Early Years students has affected their placements as schools moved once again to online lessons. Nevertheless, our students as ever are resilient and always up for a challenge.

Year 2 students Isobel Brewster and Amber Hill both volunteered to help reception teachers at Telscombe Cliffs Primary school with their Zoom lessons. Teaching phonics and maths to 60 children aged 4-5 online is no mean feat though. For obvious reasons, all mics are muted, apart from the teacher, so hand gestures and facial expressions are used to support the children's learning instead. Isobel also recorded a video in which she told a story for the children to listen to. Both students have done so well, they have now been asked to come in to support keyworker sessions.

After college, Isobel has accepted offers at Chichester and Brighton universities to study Primary Education to become a qualified teacher. Amber has offers at Sussex, Portsmouth and Winchester universities to study Childhood and Youth as part of her aspiration to become a play therapist.



VARNDEAN SEES THE LAUNCH OF ITS ONLINE STORYTELLING SOCIETY AND ETHNICITY & IDENTITY DISCUSSION GROUP



Some of the country's top storytellers, including Xanthe Gresham-Knight, Amy Sutton, Josh Crisp and Joanna Gilar, have all been invited to tell at Varndean's Storytelling Society throughout last term. The group has been a great success, with students listening in live, either from college or from home, to Tellers who were zooming in from their homes. We were even delighted to welcome one of our Japanese International Students who attended every session from Kyoto.

It is the aim of the Storytelling Society to 'Story the Curriculum and the People Who Make Use of It'. This Spring we have a 'Story for Business Studies' by Stacia Keogh and 'Oedipus the King', by Joshua Crisp, a must for any student studying the Arts and Psychology. Towards the end of term, Amy Sutton will tell the story of 'The First Non-Binary God'. Students can join our Google Classroom for resources and contact Fleur Hemmings for more details, email fms@varndean.ac.uk. Storytelling Society takes place at 12pm every Thursday lunchtime, see the College Calendar for the Meet Link.

This term has also seen the

launch of the College's Ethnicity and Identity Discussion Group that meets online at 12pm every Monday. Our first week began with an engaging discussion about Terminology. Students discussed terms they prefer to use to describe themselves, terms that they think they should use to describe others, and terms others ascribe to them which they don't like. The quality and diversity of views were very enlightening and enjoyed by all. The following week, Dohara De Silva delivered a cracking talk on Colourism. Future topics for discussion this term are Cultural Appropriation, the Wind Rush Scandal, Immigration and Sexism in Communities.

Everyone is welcome, although we hope to invite minority students in the first instance so that minority views can be heard without having to always respond to majority view questions. The group hopes to put on events in the summer term to celebrate the diverse culture of the student body. To join, again see the link in the College Events Calendar for more info and excellent resources join the Google Classroom or email fms@varndean.ac.uk

A LEVEL TEXTILES STUDENT WINS FIRST PRIZE AT KNITTING & STITCHING SHOW

Congratulations go to Year 1 Textiles student Chantelle Avery-McNeill who in December won first prize in the 11-17 years category for the Self Portrait Competition, 'Part of Beyond' at this year's Knitting & Stitching Show. Judges Jan Beaney and Jean Littlejohn's comments were 'A compact composition with a mix of freely worked hand and machine stitching that exudes personality.' Well done Chantelle.



EX-COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDENT JUDE BIRCH WORKS ON GAME FOR LEGO

Ex-student Jude Birch, who left Varndean in 2019 and took a year out to gain work experience before going on to university, has been working as a Programmer Intern for local computer games company Near Light and has been helping to develop an exciting brand-new game for LEGO! The game called 'VIDIYO', which was launched on 1 March, is a free app where users can create their own music video using animated LEGO characters and props and can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play. Further details are available from the LEGO website at <https://www.lego.com/en-gb/themes/vidiyo/about>



themes/vidiyo/about

Jude is no stranger to success, as in February 2018 was one of the winners in Google's annual Code-In competition winning himself a trip for two people to San Francisco and Google's Headquarters at Mountain View, California! An overall total of 3555 students from 78 countries took part in the competition. Later that year, Jude won The Argus's Youth in Action 'Innovator of the Year' award

sponsored by the i360 and then in the summer of 2019 was one of only 11 UK finalists in the British Academy of Film and Television Awards' (BAFTA) nationwide competition to find the country's best young game designers. Jude's submission in the '15-18 years Game Making' category was a futuristic adventure game called 'Space Core' using Unity.

Jude, who is now at the University of Sussex studying a BSc in Computer Science, said: "I feel really lucky to have the opportunity to have worked on the game, I was able to learn so much from my boss and co-workers. At Sussex I've been developing more games in my spare time and am planning to submit one game for a university game development contest. I've also been participating in more programming competitions within uni and also against other universities."

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WORKSHOPS - LED BY HANNAH COE OF UNIVERSITY OF GUILDFORD AND READING

All our Business Studies students were treated to an enthusiastic and informative workshop in February covering the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility and Greenwashing. Hannah, from the University of Guildford and Reading, delivered two energetic and fact packed online presentations looking at key points, including how businesses incorporate CSR, why they do it and what are the benefits. Hannah engaged students by giving them the opportunity to interact with the workshop through the chat function. Discussions included key buzzwords used within business CSR terminology,

as well as how new businesses could develop their CSR statement and activities in order to compete. Particular mention and thanks went to students: Hugo Tibbs, Ryan King,

Cameron Myres, Natalie Symes, Dan Bodsworth, Nevaeh Worrell, Moad Amar, Anesu Maindidze, Yasmin Alharbi, Frano Ricci, Olly Rodhouse and Spencer Maskell for their excellent and knowledgeable contribution to the session. We are also of course extremely grateful to Hannah for offering these sessions and to all the students who attended for their efforts.

AGENDA

WHAT IS CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WHY DO COMPANIES CARE ABOUT CSR?

GREENWASHING WHAT IS IT AND HOW TO SPOT IT?

SWOT ANALYSIS AND ACTIVITY





SPORTING NEWS

REGGIE WARD

Congratulations go to four Vardean College students, Nicholas Lauteri, Reggie Ward, Ben Whitmore and Sam Wright, who have been selected to represent the Sussex Schools FA U18 football team! All boys are members of the Russell Martin Football Academy, one of our Sports Performance Programmes which students can train in alongside their other studies. Very impressive, well done guys.

Extra congratulations also go to Reggie Ward who made it through to the 2nd Stage of the ECFA12 football trials held in December. Unfortunately the trials were postponed due to the pandemic, so we eagerly await for them to resume to see how Reggie gets on. Reggie is currently studying the Level 3 National Diploma in Sport at Vardean.

The Sports Department are also delighted to announce the recent collaboration with Woodingdean Wanders Football Club women's side who have teamed up with Vardean College to assist with the development of our female players. A fantastic opportunity for everyone.

RED JANUARY

Throughout January, although we couldn't be together in person, we could however all still be together in purpose by signing up to Red January, a scheme run in conjunction with Sport in Mind, the mental health charity that uses sport to empower and improve people's lives.

Participants could run, cycle, walk, or simply choose their favourite fitness activity and at the same time help raise funds for Sport in Mind. Each day throughout January, our Sports Department came up with a suggested fitness challenge posted online, which participants could then record on their Red January log, with everyone who completed the challenge winning a prize.



VARDEAN WELCOMES INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Despite the challenges and complexities of Covid-19, we still welcomed 23 new International students to the Vardean community in September 2020 ... from Hong Kong, Russia, Singapore, Iran, Switzerland, Italy, Norway and the Czech Republic.

Cheerful and enthusiastic, they have been really pleased to be here and we admire their intrepid spirit and the refreshing energy and outlook which they bring. In the words of one student: "It's lovely being here, the teachers are really engaging during classes and the students are so friendly."

We also welcomed back some of our Year 2 International students from China, South Korea and Russia. They left us in a whirlwind of madness in the Spring; battling closing borders, paying insane prices on overfull planes, self-isolating in their home-countries, often in designated 'hotels' before being able to go home, and then adapting to online learning with the additional challenge of different time zones. Well done to all of you.

CHEMISTRY NEWS

JOHN IS PICTURED HERE WITH HIS IOM AWARD WON IN JUNE 2020 ALONGSIDE THE CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT'S CHRISTMAS ADVENT CALENDAR!



CHEMISTRY TUTOR, JOHN LUTON, SWEEPS UP YET ANOTHER AWARD

As well as winning the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining's (IOM3) Sir Colin Humphrey's Education Award back in June, Vardean Chemistry tutor John Luton has added yet another accolade to his name, 'The 2020 Award for Lifetime Achievement', one of Pearson's National Teaching awards.

Pearson's President, Michael Morpurgo said about John: "The work you do, day in and day out, is life-enhancing, life-changing. For a child to have a great teacher like you is so important. You open doors, shine a light. You spend your working life passing on to children all that you know and love."

John, who has taught A Level Chemistry at Vardean since 1993, has also been the lead organiser of the annual Chemistry Conference at Brighton University for the past 20 years; offers students invaluable support each year with their BMAT exams for entry into medicine; arranges visits and talks with Brighton & Sussex Medical School; coaches students for competitions such as the RSC Chemistry Olympiad, Analytical

Competition and Cambridge Chemistry Challenge and runs the College's own weekly ChemSoc Society.

CHEMISTRY STUDENTS AWAIT THE RESULTS OF ROUND ONE OF THE CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD

Seventeen second year A Level and IB Chemistry students sat the first-round exam of the 2021 RSC Chemistry Olympiad in January. This, and the Cambridge University's C3L6 Challenge back in June, have been the only public

exams students have been allowed to take during the pandemic.

The Chemistry Olympiad is open to all schools and colleges in the UK, aimed at those students in their last year of study before higher education. The competition is designed to challenge and students should see it as an opportunity to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills, and to test their existing knowledge of chemistry in real-world situations. We currently await the results with baited breath.

Only 25-30 students are selected to progress onto round two in late March, which involves a long weekend of training and assessments (this year online) with a final theoretical test. Four students are then chosen to represent the UK at the International Chemistry Olympiad.

FUNDING FOR 'LOST LEARNING'

We are also delighted to confirm that Vardean's Chemistry Department has applied for and received funding from the Royal Society of Chemistry to fund 'lost learning' tutors who are now delivering extra tuition to students throughout the week.

'UPWARDS THROUGH BUSINESS' AWARDS CARRY ON DESPITE COVID

One of the key qualities of a successful business is the art of adaptability. In this spirit, the Business Studies programme at Vardean have continued with their termly 'Upwards Through Business' awards - virtually! Forty-six students across both year groups, studying either A Level Business or BTEC Vocational Business courses, were recognised for a range of individual qualities; including perseverance, resilience, online engagement, attendance,

quality of work, research skills and meeting deadlines. The event was held online using Google Meet presented by College Principal, Donna-Marie Janson and Jayne Hems, Assistant Head of Business and Economics. Students were thanked for all their efforts, particularly during the current challenging educational climate, and Certificates of Achievement posted home. Well done everyone, keep up the excellent work.



FINE ART STUDENT, JOESY, WINS PLACE ON THE ROYAL ACADEMY WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Congratulations to second year Fine Art student, Joesy Fincham, who recently applied to be part of The Royal Academy Creative workshops programme 'attract'.

To be selected, Joesy had to submit a piece of work based on set themes and her piece was called 'Brain Storm'. The final selection process was then an online interview with other candidates discussing their work which she too was successful in. Joesy is now participating in various online workshops and enjoying working with other young people and tutors from the Royal Academy.



JETHRO WALKS THE CATWALKS!

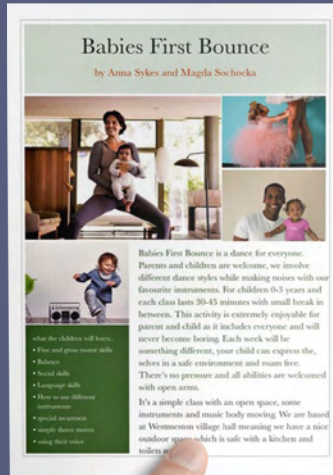
Congratulations to Year 2 Photography student Jethro Sapon who has been modelling for FendiFW21. What a fantastic achievement. Jethro is no stranger to modelling however, having already modelled for top brands such as Prada, Louis Vuitton, Moncler and Selfridges!



CHILDCARE & EDUCATION 'STUDENT OF THE MONTH' AWARDS

Congratulations go to Anna Sykes and Magda Sochocka, who were the first students to have been awarded Childcare and Education's new 'Student of the Month' award to celebrate those Year 1 students who have either worked exceptionally hard, produced a great piece of work or been outstanding in their work placement.

Anna and Magda's assignment brief was to plan opportunities for children in age brackets: 0-3 years and 4-5 years to support physical development. Students had to show their knowledge of developmental needs, use the current framework to support their ideas and present their plans in an interesting manner. Anna and Magda produced two leaflets that met all the criteria in a unique and thoughtful way. Well done, superb work.



VARNDEAN COLLEGE LAUNCHES ITS LATEST ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR 2021-2022



Whether you wish to learn new skills or simply take part in an activity that appeals to you, Varndean College has a course for you this autumn and is currently taking enrolments for its Adult Education programme commencing in September.

The Covid-19 pandemic may have lock downed our society for now, but looking ahead to the future, a return to learning might just be one of the remedies you are looking for. During these extraordinary and unprecedented times, it's still possible to plan ahead, maybe even set yourself some goals and targets for the future.

Our popular qualification courses can provide a pathway to becoming a qualified counsellor or working in the childcare and education sector. We also offer a range of GCSEs, including Maths, English, Biology, Italian & Spanish, as well as other courses to enhance employment skills such as Business Skills, Social Media for Business, Photoshop and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).



There are a wide variety of leisure courses for those looking to learn a new hobby, such as painting, flower arranging, photography, or Bridge; you can get fit with one of our many health and fitness classes, such as Yoga, Pilates or Tai Chi; or why not learn a new language or musical instrument?

Courses take place at our main Varndean College site in Surrenden Road, or as part of our Community Learning outreach programme in Bevendean, Moulsecomb, Whitehawk & Woodingdean.

Learning changes lives and it is never too late to upskill or take up a new hobby. To find out more or enrol, go to the Varndean College website www.varndean.ac.uk/adulted

FILM NEWS



FILM DIRECTOR, WILL BECHER, GIVES VIRTUAL TALK TO STUDENTS

Ex-Varndean College student and director of Shaun the Sheep Movie, Farmageddon and Shaun Series 5, Will Becher, presented a talk to Varndean students in January about his work and career in the film and media industry, including examples of model puppets and how they are operated and 'perform' on set. Students also got the opportunity to see some behind-the-scenes footage and ask questions.

When asked about his time at Varndean, Will reflected on how he was inspired by the things he did at college and how he discovered the elements that he

really enjoyed doing, such as his love of crafting and creating a film and looking through the lens of a camera. Film student, Heidi Leggett, was very much inspired and said, after the talk, how it gave her a better understanding of what was involved in the industry and she was particularly interested to learn about the way in which film makers act out the scenes to get a better understanding of the movement before modelling the puppets into the final animation. It was a fun talk and gave students a real insight into the world of film and media.



IB STUDENT USHIKA WINS CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Congratulations went to Year 1 IB student Ushika Kidd back in December who won the 2020 Design a College Christmas card competition. Ushika was presented with her prize of a £50 Amazon voucher by Principal, Donna-Marie Janson, socially distanced around the College Christmas tree. Ushika came to Varndean in September, after having moved to Brighton from Scotland, to study the International Baccalaureate Diploma in which she is studying English & World Literature, Maths, Biology, French, Spanish and History.

FILM & CREATIVE MEDIA STUDENTS GET PODCASTING AND BLOGGING

Eight second year Film Studies students; Jay Taylor-Jones, Chloe Howard, Jude Divall, Sarah Butcher, Alice Johnson, James

Leigh, Grace Smith and Solomon Newth, are members of a new Depot group called Kino Collective.

As well as producing regular podcasts about films, a blog, and numerous social media accounts, they have also been presenting monthly online 'open conversations' about film which the public are invited to join. The

group are doing so well that Jay and Chloe recently contributed to a training session for facilitators of other young programmer groups organised by Film Hub South East, part of the BFI Film Audience Netw www.lewesdepot.org/kinocollective and www.thekinosblog.blogspot.com/

Similarly, Year 2 Creative Media students have been embracing the digital technology during lockdown and have been running focus groups via Google Meet for podcasts they are making as their final project.

