



SIXTH FORM NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 - October 2020

Dear Sixth Form

I would like to congratulate you all on the way you've settled back into the routine of school. I've appreciated your communications with me about how to improve things as we're finding our way through new situations and I've detailed some of the things we're still working on within this newsletter. Remember there is a yellow feedback box in SF1 or you can email me with your ideas on how we can improve the experience of Sixth Form for you.

I'm really pleased to include a number of submissions from Sixth Form students in this issue of our newsletter. Please contact me if there's something you'd like to contribute to a future issue.

Miss Clancy

WELL-BEING THOUGHT

LIFE IS FAR FROM PERFECT, BUT THERE ARE LOTS OF REASONS FOR OPTIMISM. Setting positive goals for the future gives our lives a sense of direction and purpose. And although we face many challenges there are also lots of reasons to stay hopeful. By consciously choosing our priorities we can overcome issues, make progress and focus on what really matters.

ACTION CALENDAR: OPTIMISTIC OCTOBER 2020

MONDAY **TUESDAY** **WEDNESDAY** **THURSDAY** **FRIDAY** **SATURDAY** **SUNDAY**

"Choose to be optimistic. It feels better" - Dalai Lama

- Write down your most important goals for this month
- Look for reasons to be hopeful even in difficult times
- Take the first step towards a goal that really matters to you
- Be a realistic optimist. See life as it is, but focus on what's good
- Start your day with the most important thing on your list
- Do something constructive to improve a difficult situation
- Remember that things can change for the better
- Make progress on a project or task you have been avoiding
- Avoid blaming yourself or others. Just find the best way forward
- Take time to reflect on what you have achieved this week
- Focus on a positive change that you want to see in society
- Look for the good intentions in people around you today
- Put down your To-Do list and let yourself be spontaneous
- Do something to overcome an obstacle you are facing
- Look out for positive news and reasons to be cheerful today
- Thank yourself for achieving the things you often take for granted
- Share your most important goals with people you trust
- Make a list of things that you are looking forward to
- Set hopeful but realistic goals for the week ahead
- Find the joy in completing a task you've put off for some time
- Let go of the expectations of others and focus on what matters
- Share an inspiring idea with a loved one or colleague
- Write down 3 specific things that have gone well recently
- Recognise that you have a choice about what to prioritise
- Plan a fun or exciting activity to look forward to
- Start the week by writing down your top priorities & plans
- Be kind to yourself today. Remember, progress takes time
- Ask yourself, will this still matter a year from now?
- Find a new perspective on a problem you face
- Set a goal that links to your sense of purpose in life
- Think of 3 things that give you hope for the future

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/optimistic-october

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind



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THINGS WE ARE WORKING ON...

REQUEST FOR A PRINTER in SF1 – We have found a printer and are making arrangements for special software to be installed over half term so that you can print from your own device – we will keep you updated!



MORE VEGETARIAN FOOD in the servery (and more food in general) – we recognise that since your lunch and break times follow other year groups you were

getting last pick of the food. The Catering Team are continually working on this as we get to know the demand for different items each day. If you eat vegetarian food and would like to be part of a feedback group that can liaise with our Catering Manager please email Miss Clancy. That way we can work together to improve things for you.

SIXTH FORM SEATING and tables – with more of you in Sixth Form this year we have been working on making more space for you all. As you've seen, we've rearranged SF1 in conjunction with advice from the Head Student Team and we've managed to find some extra tables. We are still working on adapting the furniture and spaces available for Sixth Form so that it best suits your needs. This includes improving the outside space for Sixth Form ready for when we get some warmer weather again!

BEYOND 18 MEETINGS (YR13)

There are a number of you who still need to book a Beyond 18 meeting with Mrs Davies or Miss Clancy. Some more appointments will be added for after half term, please ensure you book to see someone to talk through your plans for after Sixth Form.



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELVES AND EACH OTHER

Please remember to use the wipes in SF1 regularly (particularly before and after eating) on the tables and any other surfaces you have been touching whilst using an area. Please also avoid crossing bubbles of other year groups in the servery. This might mean taking a different route or waiting until a better time to fill up your water bottle.

YEAR 13 SUMMER EXAMS

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD the recent announcements from the government that the summer exam series will be delayed by 3 weeks giving students more time to prepare for their exams. Exams will begin on 7 June and end on 2 July for almost all A and AS levels. A level results day will be held on 24 August. If you have any questions or concerns about the plans to prepare you for examinations please speak to your subject teachers or email Miss Clancy.

UCAS APPLICATIONS (YR13)

WHEN YOU ARE READY to submit your UCAS application please pay the application fee (see Mrs Bulheller if you are a bursary student) then email Miss Clancy to arrange a time for final checks and sending off. Remember, Miss Clancy's availability may not match yours so don't leave it until the last minute!

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

If there is something you would like to see included in the next newsletter or something you would like to contribute yourself, please email details to Miss Clancy.



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FILM REVIEW – THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT

THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT is a masterful product of the 20th century digital revolution playing to the audience's technological anxieties and love of the online. Considered one of the first found footage films with features such as paranormal activity following after, The Blair Witch Project directors Eduardo Sanchez and Daniel Myrick are pioneers to the horror sub-genre. The story follows three young students: Heather Donahue, Josh Leonard and Michael Williams creating a documentary about the Blair Witch legend in the Maryland backwoods. A particularly mundane yet disturbing feature using a jolted handheld camera in order to create a high level of authenticity and realism. However, to a modern viewer the film can be seen as both slow and lacking in substance to our desensitised nature. The real beauty of the film will never be experienced again due to our rapid technological advancement in society we have come a long way from 1999 and are not easily fooled. So now you may be thinking why is it scary?



The art of the Blair Witch Project is rooted in the years of preparation beforehand with a detailed and intricate advertising campaign which had members of the audience captivated by the missing cases of the three students. A whole website and documentary were created in order to feed into the realistic nature of the film and build anticipation amongst the audience. With a back story, a real urban legend and a feature length documentary the audience were completely on edge in regards to the missing cases. The journal Heather uses

to document her research on the legend was published on the website in order to create suspense. The audience of 1999 went into this film believing this was true found footage from a disappearance case. Unfortunately, the modern audience have the knowledge of this being a hoax but we can still appreciate the art of the film as a whole.

The directors used new methods in order to communicate realism but also vulnerability which is a common theme throughout the film. The loss of civilisation and the feeling of separation makes us anxious for the students with limited camera angles and harsh contrasts between the light and the dark we as the viewer are not considered - our view is restricted more. Sanchez and Myrick used unconventional methods with the actors to convey true performances dropping the actors outside the woods and giving them limited instructions on where to go. A particular scene that stood out to me was the shaking of the tent from the outside, the actors reactions to this were completely authentic as the directors were behind this jump scare – one of the only in the entire film. If you're going into this film expecting explicit horror, immense jump scares and gore you will be disappointed however what you can expect is a commentary on the concept of desperation. Within the film itself we never see the witch or any other demonic creature what we do see is iconography such as bundles of twigs and ritualistic stick corpses strung up between the trees displaying an almost Roanoke quality. As the viewer we ourselves experience the hostile nature of the woods and feel an outsider even beyond the screen.

In conclusion, the Blair Witch project is a cultural phenomenon which came out in the right place at the right time and plays on the anxiety towards the growing role of the internet within our lives. Even us as the modern viewer can relate this idea to the blurring of fact and fiction due to the multitude of information we have access to through the internet. Although we are under no illusion with our vast contextual knowledge we can still appreciate the art of this minimalist found footage horror film.

Written by Memphis Fleming 13MR



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SAFE PASSAGE FOR REFUGEES



My name is Nouran and I'm a student who loves being a St Bernard's sixth former. One of the main reasons to be here in the UK after safety is Education. I'm so passionate about education and about making change. Success is a key thing in my life.

I think that we should speak up about the issues that concern and affect us. We should make sure that our voices are heard. Other people's voices are heard. We should speak up for those whose voices aren't heard.

I come from Syria and I have been living in the UK for 4 years. I went through experiences that I wouldn't wish for any other people to go through whether they are adults, teenagers or children.

My experiences have really affected me, but I always say that I can overcome all of them and sometimes I do but sometimes I can't control to not have flashbacks. Sometimes even the horrible memories I have make me forget about all the nice memories I made with family and friends in the country I was born in and where my childhood was.

Because my experiences have affected me, I decided to speak up, fight for human rights and make change. I started by finding any opportunities of public speaking so I can educate other people about how horrible the things I have been through are and so they can speak up too for those whose voices aren't heard. Last March I was introduced to the safe passage organisation and I became safe passage young leader/ ambassador!

A bit about Safe Passage

Safe Passage advocates for young refugees to access safe and legal routes to sanctuary. Through a combination of campaigning, advocacy and legal casework, safe passage influence policy and work directly with young people and their families to help them be reunited. Our work is rooted in grassroots community organising and youth-led social change. We have offices in the UK, France and Greece.

We also have a group of young people who speak out about issues that affect them and others like them and campaign for a more welcoming, just and equal world.

What have we been up to?

- We have been meeting on Zoom every week since the start of Lockdown.
- Some of us had meetings with a journalist from the Guardian newspaper and some of our stories were put out there.
- We did a video campaign on family reunion with the Hummingbird group.
- We have had Joint workshops with Hummingbird and KRAN groups from different organisations who do similar things to us.
- We have met with Stuart Macdonald SNP MP, and Lord Bassam, who's a member of the House of Lords.
- We have written a letter to the House of Lords asking them to vote for family reunion.
- We went down to the house of parliament with the Hummingbird and KRAN and delivered the letter to them few weeks ago.
- We have Written to our MPs about this issue, waiting for a respond from them and we are hoping to have meetings with them and tell them about our experiences and talk to them about the issues we are concerned about.
- We have had a few workshops on children's rights, parliament and public speaking and we are planning to do some more for the next few weeks.

Written by Nouran Tohmeh 12FH



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CAN FAST FASHION EXIST IN A MORE SUSTAINABLE WORLD? THE ANSWER IS COMPLICATED.

Reduce. Reuse. Recycle. That's the advice that the Environmental Protection Agency gives to consumers to help save the environment. So, customers shopping H&M's Conscious or Zara's Join Life collections are doing their part, right? Well not exactly. Let's take a vegan jacket from Zara. Sure, it may be more animal friendly than one from a high-priced fur store, where they breed geese in cages and pluck them for their fur (Cough. Cough. Canada Goose), or even a posh boutique in Chelsea where you have to show your respected postcode before even entering their doors. The fact still remains that they use polyurethane, an adhesive used in building insulations and solid plastics. In simpler terms, this means that this £60 jacket won't biodegrade anytime soon. But, look on the bright side it's better for the environment. That is if you don't look at the shiny label and see that it is still 87 per cent polyester and 13 percent cotton. The only part that's polyurethane is the coating on top of the coat. Therefore, around 4,000 gallons of water has been used to produce an item that will eventually collect dust in your wardrobe after you decide that brown is just not your colour.



H&M
CONSCIOUS



But how did we get into this symbiotic relationship? How have we managed to become obsessed with these blindingly fast-paced brands? Think back to 2012, the year of glitter pumps and statement pants. But, most importantly the birth of the influencer. The rise of this culture and marketing has opened up a niche for fast fashion brands, specifically online retailers, to flourish. Thanks to social media's constantly changing, visually driven nature, brands have joined with popular celebrities, like the Kardashians, who can turn whatever they wear into an instant trend. In turn, stirring people to 'exclusive' fashion brands like fashion nova, who would have previously been seen on online safety pilot websites for stealing bank details and having chemical-smelling clothes. But, it's okay now because Kylie wears those stretchy, oddly see-through leggings so we must trust these brands. Not only has Kylie made us buy scratchy pants but she has also helped change the way we view clothes. For instance, according to a 2017 survey commissioned by the London sustainability firm Hubbub, 41 per cent of 18 to 25 year-olds feel pressured to wear a different outfit every time they go out. Fast fashion, then, appears to be the simple solution to appease our desire for novelty. It's much easier to avoid outfit repetition when clothes only cost £30.

So, where do we go from here? Fortunately, we are not too far gone that we have to take up our bedroom carpet and wrap it around us in a sort of avenger style dress. But we do have to be more conscious in buying clothes which could be seen as just as humiliating and painful to shopaholics like Rebecca Bloomwood. A sustainable life recommends that when we're thinking of buying a new outfit, we ask ourselves "*Will I wear these 30 times? And if you won't, then don't buy it*". Well in the case for most people, this advice is not very effective when it comes to convincing them to not to buy a dress. However, we can find a wormhole in this by looking on either eBay or Depop for the same item. In turn, preventing the garment from going to landfill and the embarrassment of having to search through our purses for the correct change.

Our ongoing challenge, then, will be to negotiate our thirst for new clothes and the future of the planet while still looking Instagram worthy, perhaps there might be a place for DIY carpet dresses after all!

Written by India Briars 13AC