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Thamesmead Times

The Student Newspaper for Thamesmead School



Thamesmead's Annual Sports Day 2021

The four Thamesmead houses, Centaur, Dragon, Phoenix and Griffin have daringly competed against each other for the glorious title of "The 2021 Sport's day champions", and the winners were announced in front of the whole school, on Friday the 9th of July. Many events took place, (every year competing separately), including a spectacular teacher's relay, which was won by Mr Patel (the Head of Year 7), supporting Dragon!

Here are the details of all the events:

Standing Long Jump

This event took place in the Sports hall, where students were required to

jump, with no run-up, and then land on either their whole foot or toes. Their results were given in centimeters, and everyone competed in their houses. Medals were also rewarded to two pupils who jumped the longest distance.

Long Jump

This event took place outside on the sandpit are of the field, where participants needed to take a run-up of 10 steps and then land in the sand on either their foot or toes. This event was like the standing long jump, but with a run-up. Their results were optionally given in centimeters, and everyone also competed in their

houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who jumped the longest distance.

Long Jump

This event took place outside on the sandpit pupils needed to take a run-up of ten steps and then land in the sand on either their foot or toes. This event was like the standing long jump, but with a run-up. Their results were optionally given in centimeters, and everyone else competed in their houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who jumped the longest distance.

Triple Long Jump

This event also took place outside on the sandpit area of the field, where competitors needed to take a run-up of any unlimited distance and then execute a hop, three times, and eventually land on their whole foot. Their results were optionally given, and everyone also competed in their houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who jumped the longest distance.

100, 200, 300, 400, 600, 800 meter runs

This event took place on the running track located in the middle of the field, where contestants were required to run a certain amount of distance against other students, who were also timed. However, year 7 were not obliged to do the 800-meter run. Everyone's results were optionally given, and everyone also competed in their houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who won each race.

Shot-put

This event took place on an area of the field. Everyone competing was required to throw a weighted ball at the best of their ability. Each student had three attempts and their best performance will be recorded by the shot-put judge. Everyone needed to throw from within the throwing circle. Their results were also optionally given, and everyone also competed in their houses. Medals

were rewarded to two pupils who threw for the longest distance.

Javelin

This event took place on an area of the field. All the students participating needed to throw a javelin (with no run-up, but some were optional) and the tip of the javelin needed to strike the ground first. The javelin did not need to stick in the ground for it to be a valid throw. Everyone competed in their houses and medals were rewarded to two pupils who threw for the longest distance.

Welly Throw

This event also took place on an area of the field. All competitors were required to throw a Wellington boot as far as possible and the judges recorded the longest and best distances of each pupil. Their results were also optionally given, and everyone also competed in their houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who threw for the longest distance.

Discus

This event also took place on an area of the field. All competitors were required to throw a discus as far as possible and the judges recorded the longest and best distances of each pupil. Their results were also optionally given, and everyone also competed in their houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who

threw for the longest distance.

High Jump

This event took place in the athletic sports hall. Everyone who was chosen to compete needed to choose a run-up distance and a type of high jump (for example a scissor kick) and attempt to jump or leap over a pole that was possibly raised each time. Results were also optionally given, and everyone also competed in their houses. Medals were rewarded to two pupils who had the highest and most accurate jumps.

OVERALL RESULTS

CENTAUR – 882 POINTS

DRAGON - 963 POINTS

GRIFFIN – 934 POINTS

PHOENIX - 987 POINTS

By Rebecca Popa Y7





Pride Month

As I'm sure many of you know, June is Pride Month! Gay Pride is a celebration of self-affirmation in the LGBTQ+ community and is celebrated all over the world in many different (equally fabulous) ways.

The History Of Pride and the Stonewall Riots:

Pride Month originated on the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. The Stonewall Riots were a series of spontaneous uprisings from the LGBTQ+ communities in New York, on the 28th June 1969. Leading up to this, there had been a lot of political unrest and police often raided gay bars. Tortured and taunted, the gay community was furious. Police were supposed to protect the public, and yet they took suspected cross-dressers to the bathrooms to check their gender? Sick of the suppression, they fought back. As the violence with which the police manhandled people increased, so did the agitation of the gathering crowd. It is said that

an officer hit a lesbian over the head, she shouted at the onlookers to act. And act they did. Within minutes, a full-scale riot was underway – hundreds of people shouting and attempting to set fire to the bar. Eventually the raging flames were doused, but the raging anger inside the LGBTQ+ community could not be. The riots continued for five more days, which led to the modern-day pride celebrations.

Pride Around the World:

Pride is celebrated in so many glamorous ways around the world, here are a few examples of them. Tel Aviv's pride is the largest celebration of the LGBTQ+ community in the whole of the Middle East. The main parade takes place on the 25th of June, but there are parties in the city's many gay nightclubs all week. Greece is known for its many pride celebrations throughout the country. The most renowned ones are in Athens (known for their parades), Thessaloniki (known for their live music and

in Crete (known for their beach parties).

Pride in 2021:

Pride celebrations are all fabulous no matter where in the world you are, and it is incredibly important to promote the ongoing struggles for the LGBTQ+ community. Due to COVID-19, many Pride celebrations (including the London one) have been postponed until it is safe to gather and celebrate in the traditional manner. However, you can show your support this June by standing up against homophobia and transphobia, speaking out against anti-gay slurs and being supportive of your friends who choose to come out. The LGBTQ+ community has come incredibly far, and society as a whole is so much more supportive, but the battle is not yet won. It is greatly appreciated.

By Rowan Norbury Y8

China: A Rising World Power

The Chinese Communist Party has been at the helm of Chinese government for many decades now and under the country's Communist administrations, China has experienced rapid development and many of its citizens now enjoy an excellent quality of life. For many, the CCP has brought stability and prosperity to the nation, however Western governments are, to say the least, concerned about the influence that China now wields over all our lives, with the country suspected to have many dark secrets. As China becomes ever more powerful, the world now asks: is China too big to bully? How do we approach a world in which China is the new mega-power? And is a second Cold War on the horizon or has it already arrived?

Admittedly, China is no North Korea, but it is irrefutable that Chinese citizens are gifted significantly fewer liberties than we are in countries like the United Kingdom. In truth, China's strategies and stances on key issues are polar opposites of those adopted by Western countries. Their government is very authoritarian, meaning that the Chinese Communist Party, including the President, can exert their power and impose laws with negligible opposition, or none. By doing this, Communist China believes that it is easier to drive forward with projects with minimal delay and maintain law and order within China's borders. You have to say, irrespective of which side of the debate you are on, it is indisputable that China's achievements have been remarkable lately.

A friend of mine, who wishes to remain anonymous, used to live in China and I recently discussed his personal experiences with him. His experiences were generally positive, and he is optimistic about the route that China is taking. One standout point that he made was that students would spend approximately 8 to 10 hours at school every day. Although China is heavily associated with manufacturing, he also spoke of a gradual shift to the technology and research sectors.



In addition, he made the point that there has been a lot of development in the more rural areas of China and a big push to lift a lot of the rural villages out of poverty, also creating better transport links, hospitals, and schools. He said that this gave the rural population the same life chances and privileges as those in the urban areas. Additionally, the introduction of 5G networks has been implemented in transport, healthcare, and agriculture, which he claims to be driving development even further.

Even though the People's Republic of China is on a positive trajectory, recently, Western nations have clashed with China over its positions on many geopolitical issues, especially those regarding Taiwan and Hong Kong. A former British territory, Hong Kong is now a special administrative region of China under a one country, two systems arrangements, allowing Hong Kong to have more freedoms than the rest of China. During 2019, however, the British media heavily covered the pro-democratic demonstrations in Hong Kong, following the introduction of a controversial extradition bill, which would allow China to extradite criminals to the mainland. Many argued that the bill undermines Hong Kong's, albeit limited, autonomy, and the general feeling amongst these protesters was that China is surreptitiously tightening their grip over Hong Kong, leaving protesters pessimistic over their future.

When it comes to relations with China, the United Kingdom's approach under Johnson's premiership has been, overall, rather consistent. The Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, responded to the ongoing situation in Hong Kong by condemning China for their ongoing

'non-compliance' with the joint declaration. He additionally offered Hong Kong residents an opportunity to reside in the UK if they wished to do so, clearly indicating that the government still feels a responsibility to stand up for the agreement that they signed all those years ago. On the contrary, during David Cameron's tenure as Prime Minister, the government was more intent on securing a better working relationship between Britain and China, orchestrating an elaborate state visit for Xi Jinping, China's President, which even included a meeting with the Queen. Boris Johnson's government, however, has largely maintained a firm stance on China, remaining wary of the country's actions and more importantly, their intentions, in this rapidly changing and evolving world that we live in. Moreover, Taiwan, the last fragment of the old Republic of China after the civil war, is viewed by Communist China as a rebel, breakaway province that will inevitably be part of China again. Lately, there has been mounting speculation that Taiwan will be invaded by China in the not-so distant future, with one of the CCP's main objectives being to bring all of China's land under the control of the Communist government.

Over the years, Taiwanese society has become very different to the People's Republic, considering that a democratic government has been established and the island very much so functions as its own, independent country. In the eventuality of a hypothetical invasion, there would most certainly be heightened tensions between the West, especially the United States, and China, since it is thought that the United States would support Taiwan during a military confrontation. From the way that experts and politicians have been speaking recently, it seems as if a Chinese invasion may not be such a remote possibility and this issue could spark a

looming crisis in Southeast Asia, one which would indicate a widening divide in belief between the modern world's two mega powers.

When discussing China, there is one politician who always springs to mind, and yes, it is Donald Trump. He seems to obsess about China, but the question is why? The over-riding theme of Trump's rants generally revolves around the theory that the United States, including the average American, gets a rotten deal when compared to the average Chinese citizen. He argues that while one country, China is on a phenomenal rise, the United States, although they are still powerful, is in decline - and that doesn't seem to be too incorrect. It seems as if China is slowly but surely dominating the world scene, dictating large quantities of world trade and manufacturing. President Xi Jinping announced that he was going to set up a \$900 billion scheme called the New Silk Road, which would bolster trans-Eurasian trade and bring lots of economic benefits to China. It would be an understatement to say that China is ambitious with their projects.

On a less cheerful note, China has been accused continuously of violating human rights in the most abhorrent of ways, primarily in their re-education camps, which are said to help those affected by religious extremism. However, some have even gone as far as saying that what is going on in China is closer to persecution of the Uyghur Muslim population. Despite growing pressure, China has repeatedly refused access for independent inspectors to dive deeper into the structure and everyday functioning of these camps, leaving many unanswered questions and uncertainty around what goes on within China's re-education institutions.

Furthermore, there has recently been some concern regarding our security and private information in the hands of Chinese companies,

more specifically Huawei and TikTok. These worries follow suspicions that the Chinese government were using these companies' services to spy on their Western users and customers. To me, this sort of thing shines light on the kind of disputes we typically see between ourselves and China. As we go into the future, I personally doubt that the West and China will become any less cynical of one another's intentions, quite evidently displayed in the prior example. In addition, allegations are now being made against China suggesting that they deceived the West into thinking that the COVID-19 outbreak was not as serious as it was. We are coming to accept now that whenever there are two powers with contrasting beliefs and views, there are bound to be disagreements and confrontations. However, in a society of rapid developments in technology, ingenious inventions, remarkable discoveries and limitless possibilities of space exploration, there are very few constants but one thing we can be sure of is that China shall be a major player in all the achievements and challenges that the 21st century still has to offer.

By Carl Egginton Y10

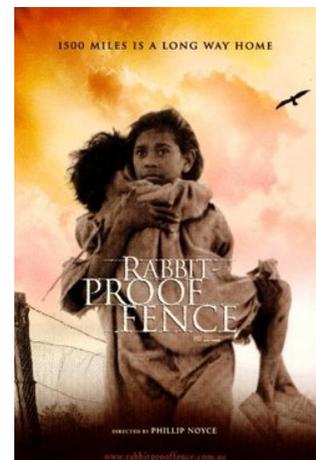
Year 8 English: Rabbit Proof Fence Film Reviews

Rabbit Proof fence follows the story of three girls who try to escape from Moore River after being taken from their home. Molly is a headstrong stubborn girl who helped her sister and cousin escape. She is played by Everlyn Scampi. She remembered some things about how to get home after being taken to the Moore River settlement, but Gracie is reluctant and shy. She also tries to stop when she feels scared but often follows anyway. Gracie is played by Laura Monaghan. Daisy is the younger sister of Molly. She follows her sister without question and is played by Tianna Sansbury. However, they are tracked by an aboriginal tracker who is merely trying to stay near his daughter. (Played by David Gulpillil) and A.O Neville (Kenneth Branagh) the man responsible for the girl's abduction. One of the messages of the film is that determination always wins.

In my opinion is this film is good as it illustrates a problem that happened in real life and explains a lot about the stolen generation (the abducted children). It also

shows how racism was present in Australia with a vengeance. In my opinion the person who gave the best performance was the tracker as he was trying to illustrate a man who hates what he is doing but can't see anyway out or how to solve his problem and as such continues with what he has been told to do. During the film we often see symbolic representations such as when we first see A.O Neville and how he appears to be writing this illustrates the fact that he can easily dictate these people's fate and can move them at his leisure.

By Sam Capper Y8



Rabbit Proof Fence - A heart-breaking, heart-wrenching true story - is an adventure film, based in 1931 Australia. Noyce explores the innocent of The Stolen Generation and the discrimination they suffered as Aborigines. Similar to Molly (Everlyn Scampi), Daisy (Tianna Sansbury), and Gracie (Laura Monaghan), viewers watch the realistic narrative of three girls trying to escape from the Aboriginal concentration camp - Moore River. Audiences follow the three protagonists escape from Moore River to their home town in Jigalong - but did they escape? That's for you to find out.

By Ava Jenkins Y8

Grenfell: Four Years Later



The face at the window by Sarah Vassallo Y9

Outside the tower, the city is awash with noise and commotion,

Yet standing there, I hear nothing,

Gazing up at the window where I last saw you, my heart stops beating;

Memories flowing like golden rivers through my blue veins,

Yearning to see you there again, tears prick at the corners of my eyes,

Threatening to tear down the wall I built there four years ago,

To lock it all inside, the feelings,

To swallow the sadness that stalked my body like a silent killer.

Still breathing, but hollow,

And so fragile that like ash, one blow and I would disappear,

But no, I would not cry today,

Water could not get to you in time, so why waste it now, and let it spill down my face,

I remember hoping, praying to see you walk out of that door alive,

I remember everything.

June 14th and we're asleep together,

Curled up on the sofa after watching a movie,

Smelling acrid smoke, you wake me up,

Not from a nightmare, but into one,

And one I can't wake up from,

We scramble to the door hearing screams piecing through the night like daggers.

The smoke's sinewy arms strangling us as death's fiery tongue licks the hallway alight,

Looking into each other's eyes, we stared into the other's soul,

As the blue and red lights shone our fate across the night sky,

Huddling together under the window, we watched as flames tore through the darkness,

Until hearing a yelp in the stairwell, I ran to help,

I left you behind, as wrapped in a blanket you sat gazing into nothingness,

Not noticing as the fire crept stealthily along the hall,

Not until it was too late,

I arrived back to a fiery inferno of flames spiraling like a tornado through the doorway,

You yell "RUN!!" at me through the blaze and with a lamented smile, you nod,

Blinking away the cascading stream of tears, I stumble absentmindedly down the stairs,

In a haze of adrenaline until I'm outside,

And there I am staring up at you,

Goodbye written in your eyes, you face the flames and disappear forever,

I'm alone again on the bustling streets of London,

And in the empty window I can see your face as you whisper goodbye on the wind...

I whisper back, "I'll never forget you".

Spotted! New Art Displays



Photos taken by Lily Pratt Y8

Bronze & Silver Duke of Edinburgh



Photos taken by Ms Dos Remedios

Fifty-Five Years of Hurt and Counting



This year marks the 25th anniversary of the hit football anthem, Three Lions, to which we all chanted 'It's Coming Home' since the beginning of this year's European Championships. And over the years, the tally of 'thirty years of hurt' has crept up, as England fans still wait upon our first major championship since the glory days of '66.

Many believed that the curse was over, that a new generation of English footballers, a distinctly different side to the one that was humiliated by Iceland just 5 years ago, was finally able to go all the way. This time round, we had something that we didn't have in the days of Beckham and Rooney, a brilliant tactician in Southgate, who made all the right decisions at the right times. Unfortunately, the attention has now been diverted to the disappointment – the 5 England stars who stood up to the plate during the

shootout – 3 of which made soul-destroying mistakes which led to misses.

The plague of racism has recently returned to football, in a manner that we have seen on a number of occasions in the past. Seeing as the 3 individuals who missed their penalties came from ethnic minority backgrounds, an ignorant minority of people took it upon themselves to directly connect the disappointment of the final with the three players' skin colours. Racist abuse was hurled towards Jadon Sancho, Bukayo Saka and Marcus Rashford, which indicates that football's shameful past with racism is still prevalent to this day. In light of the situation, this has become a messy political battle between Labour and the Conservatives in the Commons, with debates surrounding racism, discrimination over social media and taking the knee all arising during Prime Minister's Questions. This tournament, which has

unified this country and its communities, has ended in more of a toxic way than one could have imagined.

But the future is looking bright: developing young stars like Saka, Foden and Mount; World Class players with new-found form, such as Sterling; legends like Harry Kane; and heroes like Jordan Pickford, who has cemented his place between the sticks for England. All these players have given us reason to be optimistic.

Next year, we will go into Qatar with a re-energised squad, ready for a World Cup campaign. With a World Cup semi-final and European Championship final under our belts, is it only a matter of time that we go all the way to win a major international tournament? I really do hope so.

By Carl Egginton Y10